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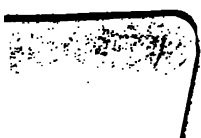
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Christ's Divinity

"Thou art the Everlasting Son of the Father."—TE DEUM.

THE Divinity of God's own Son, freely given for us sinners to suffer and to die, is the very heart of our Christian faith. It cannot be denied without tearing out the vitals of a living Christianity. Its roots are struck far back into the prophecy, the typology, the ethics, of the Old Testament. It alone supplies a satisfactory explanation of the moral attitude of Jesus Christ towards His contemporaries. It is the true key to His teaching, to His miracles, to the leading mysteries of His life, to His power of controlling the issues of history. As such, it is put forward by Apostles who, differing in much beside, were made one by this faith in His Divinity, and in the truths which are bound up with it. It enters into the world of speculative discussion; it is analyzed, criticised, denounced, proscribed, betrayed; yet it emerges from the crucible in which it has been exposed to the action of every intellectual solvent that hostile ingenuity could devise; it has lost nothing from, it has added nothing to, its original significance; it has only been clothed in a symbol which interprets it to new generations, and which

lives in the confessions of a grateful Church. The question of Christ's Divinity is the question of the truth or falsehood of Christianity.

But the doctrine of Christ's Divinity does not merely bind us to the historic past, and above all to the first records of Christianity ; it is at this hour the strength of the Christian Church. There are forces abroad in the world of thought which, if they could be viewed apart from all that counteracts them, might well make a Christian fear for the welfare of humanity. It is not merely that the Church is threatened with the loss of possessions secured to her by the reverence of centuries, and of a place of honour which may perhaps have guarded civilization more effectively than it can be shown to have strengthened religion. The faith has once triumphed without these gifts of Providence, and, if God wills, she can again dispense with them. But never since the first ages of the Gospel was fundamental Christian truth denounced and denied so largely, and with such passionate animosity, as is the case at this moment in each of the most civilized nations of Europe. It may be that God has in store for His Church greater trials to her faith than she has yet experienced ; it may be that, along with the revived scorn of the old pagan spirit, the persecuting sword of pagan hatred will yet be unsheathed. Be it so, if so He wills it. The Holy City is strong in knowing "that God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed. God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen make much ado, and the kingdoms are moved ; but God hath

showed His voice, and the earth shall melt away." When the waters of human opinion rage and swell, and the mountains shake at the tempest of the same, our Divine Lord is not unequal to the defence of His name and His honour. If the sky seem dark and the winds contrary; if ever and anon the strongest intellectual and social currents of our civilization mass themselves threateningly, as if to overwhelm the holy bark as she rides upon the waves; we know Who is with her, unwearied and vigilant, though He should seem to sleep. His presence forbids despondency; His presence assures us that a cause which has consistently conquered in its day of apparent failure, cannot but calmly abide the issue. "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Would that the anxieties might, in God's good providence, work out a remedy for the wounds of His Church! Would that in presence of the common foe, and yet more by clinging to the common faith, Christians could learn to understand each other! Surely it might seem that agreement in so stupendous a belief, in the Divinity of our Crucified Lord, might avail to overshadow, or rather to force on a reconciliation of the differences which divide those who share it. Is it but the indulgence of a fond dream to hope that a heartier, more meditative,

more practical grasp of the Divinity of Jesus, will one day again unite His children in the bonds of a restored unity? Is it altogether chimerical to expect that Christians who believe Christ to be truly God, will see more clearly what is involved in that faith, and what is inconsistent with it; that they will supply what is wanting or will abandon what is untenable in their creed and practice, so that before men and angels they may openly unite in the adoring confession of their Divine Head? The pulse quickens, and the eyes fill with tears, at the bare thought of this vision of peace, at this distant but blessed prospect of a reunited Christendom. What dark doubts would it not dispel! What deep consolations would it not shed forth on millions of souls! What fascination would not the spectacle of concordant prayer and harmonious action among the servants of Christ exert over the hearts of sinners! With what majestic energy would the re-invigorated Church, "terrible as an army with banners," address herself forthwith to the heartier promotion of man's best interests, to the richer development of the Christian life, to more energetic labours for the conversion of the world! But we may not dwell, except in hope and prayer, upon the secrets of Divine Providence. It may be our Lord's purpose to show to His servants of this generation only His work, and to reserve for their children the vision of His glory. It must be our duty, in view of His revealed will, and with a simpler faith in His wisdom and His power, to pray our Lord "that all they that do confess God's Holy

Name may agree in the truth of His Holy Word, and live in unity and Godly love."

And for you, my dear brethren here present, what can the preacher more fittingly or more sincerely desire, than that any clearer sight of the Divine Person of our glorious and living Lord, which may have been granted you, may be by Him blessed to your present sanctification and to your endless peace? If you are intellectually persuaded that in confessing the true Godhead of Jesus you have not followed a cunningly-devised fable, or the crude imagination of a semi-barbarous and distant age, then do not allow yourselves to rest content with this intellectual persuasion. A truth so sublime, so imperious, has other work to do in you besides shaping into theoretic compactness a certain district of your thought about the goodness of God and the wants of man. The Divine Christ of the Gospel and the Church is no mere actor, though He were the greatest, in the great tragedy of human history. He belongs not exclusively or especially to the past. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He is at this moment all that He was eighteen centuries ago, all that He has been to our fathers, all that He will be to our children. He is the Divine and Infallible Teacher, the Healer and Pardoner of sin, the Source of all Graces, the Conqueror of Satan and of death—now, as of old, and as in years to come. Now as heretofore, He is "able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him." Now, as on the day of His triumph over death, "He opens the Kingdom of Heaven to all

believers." Now, as in the first age of the Church, He it is "that hath the key of David, that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Rev. iii. 7). He is ever the Same; but, as the children of time, whether for good or evil, we move onwards in perpetual change. The hours of life pass, they do not return; they pass, yet they are not forgotten; "pereunt et imputantur." But the present is our own; we may resolve, if we will, to live as men who live for the glory of an Incarnate God. Brethren, you shall not repent it, if, when life's burthens press heavily, and especially at that solemn hour when human help must fail, you are able to lean with strong confidence on the arm of an Almighty Saviour. May He in deed and truth be with you, alike in your pilgrimage through this world, and when that brief journey is drawing to its close! May you, sustained by His Presence and aid, so pass through the valley of the shadow of death as to fear no evil, and to find, at the gate of the eternal world, that all the yearnings of faith and hope are to be more than satisfied by the Vision of the Divine "King in His Beauty."

THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD, p. 505.

Christ Adored by the Early Martyrs

“The noble army of martyrs: praise Thee.”—TE DEUM.

THE death-cry of the martyrs must have familiarized the heathen mind with the honour paid to the Redeemer by Christians. Of the worship offered in the Catacombs, of the stern yet tender discipline whereby the early Church stimulated, guided, moulded the heavenward aspirations of her children, paganism knew, could know, nothing. But the bearing and the exclamations of heroic servants of Christ when arraigned before the tribunals of the empire, or when exposed to a death of torture and shame in the amphitheatres, were matters of public notoriety. The dying prayers of St. Stephen expressed the instinct, if they did not provoke the imitation, of many a martyr of later days. What matters it to Blandina of Lyons that her pagan persecutors have first entangled her limbs in the meshes of a large net, and then have exposed her to the fury of a wild bull? She is insensible to pain; she is entranced in a profound communion with Christ. What matters it to that servant-boy in Palestine, Porphyry, that his mangled body is “committed to a slow fire”? He does but call more earnestly in his death-

struggle upon Jesus. Felix, an African bishop, after a long series of persecutions, has been condemned to be beheaded at Venusium for refusing to give up the sacred books to the proconsul. "Raising his eyes to heaven, he said with a clear voice, 'O Lord God of heaven and earth, Jesu Christ, to Thee do I bend my neck by way of sacrifice, O Thou Who abidest for ever, to Whom belong glory and majesty, world without end, Amen.'"

Theodotus of Ancyra has been betrayed by the apostate Polychronius, and is joining in a last prayer with the sorrowing Church. "Lord Jesu Christ," he cries, "Thou Hope of the hopeless, grant that I may finish the course of my conflict, and offer the shedding of my blood as a libation and sacrifice, to the relief of all those who suffer for Thee. Do Thou lighten their burden, and still this tempest of persecution, that all who believe in Thee may enjoy rest and quietness." And afterwards, in the extremity of his torture, he prays thus: "Lord Jesu Christ, Thou Hope of the hopeless, hear my prayer, and assuage this agony, seeing that for Thy Name's sake I suffer thus." And when the pain had failed to bend his resolution, and the last sentence had been pronounced by the angry judge, "O Lord Jesus Christ," the martyr exclaims, "Thou Maker of heaven and earth, Who forsakest not them that put their hope in Thee, I give Thee thanks for that Thou hast made me meet to be a citizen of Thy heavenly city, and to have a share in Thy kingdom. I give Thee thanks that Thou hast given me strength to conquer the dragon, and to bruise his head. Give rest unto Thy servants,

and stay the fierceness of the enemies in my person. Give peace unto Thy Church, and set her free from the tyranny of the devil.”

Thus it was that the martyrs prayed and died. Their voices reach us across the chasm of intervening centuries; but time cannot impair the moral majesty, or weaken the accents of their strong and simple conviction. One after another their piercing words, in which the sharpest human agony is so entwined with a superhuman faith, fall upon our ears. “O Christ, Thou Son of God, deliver Thy servants.” “O Lord Jesu Christ, we are Christians; Thee do we serve; Thou art our Hope; Thou art the Hope of Christians; O God Most Holy, O God Most High, O God Almighty.” “O Christ,” cries a martyr again and again amidst his agonies—“O Christ, let me not be confounded.” “Help, I pray Thee. O Christ, have pity. Preserve my soul, guard my spirit, that I be not ashamed. I pray Thee, O Christ, grant me power of endurance.” “I pray Thee, Christ, hear me. I thank Thee, my God: command that I be beheaded. I pray Thee, Christ, have mercy: help me, Thou Son of God.” “I pray Thee, O Christ: all praise to Thee. Deliver me, O Christ; I suffer in Thy Name. I suffer for a short while; I suffer with a willing mind, O Christ my Lord: let me not be confounded.”

Or listen to such an extract from an early document as the following: “Calvisianus, interrupting Euplius, said, ‘Let Euplius, who hath not in compliance with the edict of the emperors given up the sacred writings, but readeth

them to the people, be put to the torture.' And while he was being racked, Euplius said, 'I thank Thee, O Christ. Guard Thou me, who for Thee am suffering thus.' Calvisianus the consular said, 'Cease, Euplius, from this folly. Adore the gods, and thou shalt be set at liberty.' Euplius said, 'I adore Christ: I utterly hate the demons. Do what thou wilt: I am a Christian. Long have I desired what now I suffer. Do what thou wilt. Add yet other tortures: I am a Christian.' After he had been tortured a long while, the executioners were bidden hold their hands. And Calvisianus said, 'Unhappy man, adore the gods. Pay worship to Mars, Apollo, and Æsculapius.' Euplius said, 'I worship the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I adore the Holy Trinity, besides Whom there is no God. Perish the gods who did not make heaven and earth, and all that is in them. I am a Christian.' Calvisianus the præfect said, 'Offer sacrifice, if thou wouldst be set at liberty.' Euplius said, 'I sacrifice myself only to Christ, my God: more than this I cannot do. Thy efforts are to no purpose; I am a Christian.' Calvisianus gave orders that he should be tortured again more severely. And while he was being tortured, Euplius said, 'Thanks to Thee, O Christ. Help me, O Christ. For Thee do I suffer thus, O Christ.' And he said this repeatedly. And as his strength gradually failed him, he went on repeating these or other exclamations, with his lips only—his voice was gone."

You cannot, as I have already urged, dismiss from

your consideration such prayers as these, on the ground of their being "mere ejaculations." Do serious men, who know they are dying, "ejaculate" at random? Is it at the hour of death that a man would naturally innovate upon the devotional habits of a lifetime? Is it at such an hour that he would make hitherto unattempted enterprises into the unseen world, and address himself to beings with whom he has not before deemed it lawful or possible to hold spiritual communion? Is not the reverse of this supposition notoriously the case? Surely, those of us who have witnessed the last hours of the servants of Christ cannot hesitate as to the answer. As the soul draws nigh to the gate of death, the solemnities of the eternal future are wont to cast their shadows upon the thought and heart: and whatever is deepest, truest, most assured and precious, thenceforth engrosses every power. At that dread yet blessed hour, the soul clings with a new intensity and deliberation to the most certain truths, to the most prized and familiar words. The mental creations of an intellectual over-subtlety, or of a thoughtless enthusiasm, or of an unbridled imagination, or of a hidden perversity of will, or of an unsuspected unreality of character, fade away or are discarded. To gaze upon the naked truth is the one necessity; to plant the feet upon the Rock Itself, the supreme desire, in that awful, searching, sifting moment. Often, too, at a man's last hour, will habit strangely assert its mysterious power of recovering, as if from the grave, thoughts and memories which seemed to have been lost for ever. Truths which

have been half forgotten or quite forgotten since childhood, and prayers which were learnt at a mother's knee, return upon the soul with resistless persuasiveness and force, while the accumulations of later years disappear and are lost sight of. Depend upon it, the martyrs prayed to Jesus in their agony. because they had prayed to Him long before, many of them from infancy ; because they knew from experience that such prayers were blessed and answered. They had been taught to pray to Him ; they had joined in prayers to Him : they had been taunted and ridiculed for praying to Him : they had persevered in praying to Him : and when at last their hour of trial and of glory came, they had recourse to the prayers which they knew full well to be the secret of their strength, and those prayers carried them on through their agony, to the crown beyond it.

THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD, p. 406.

Early Hymns of the Church of Christ

"Come before His presence with a song."—Ps. c. 2.

It is clear that Christian hymnody has ever been prized and hated for its services in popularizing the worship of Jesus Christ. Hymnody actively educates, while it partially satisfies, the instinct of worship; it is a less formal and sustained act of worship than prayer, yet it may really involve transient acts of the deepest adoration. But, because it is less formal; because in using it the soul can pass, as it were, unobserved and at will from mere sympathetic states of feeling to adoration, and from adoration back to passive although reverent sympathy;—hymnody has always been a popular instrument for the expression of religious feeling. And from the first years of Christianity it seems to have been especially consecrated to the honour of the Redeemer. . . .

Of the early hymns of the Church of Christ some remain to this day among us, as witnesses and expressions of her faith in Christ's Divinity. Such are the *Tersanctus* and the *Gloria in Excelsis*. Both belong to the second century; both were introduced, it is difficult to say how early, into the eucharistic office; both pay Divine

honours to our Blessed Lord. As each morning dawned, the Christian of primitive days repeated in private the *Gloria in Excelsis*; it was his hymn of supplication and praise to Christ. How wonderfully does it blend the appeal to our Lord's human sympathies with the confession of His Divine prerogatives!

“O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, That takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.” How thrilling is that burst of praise, which at last drowns the plaintive notes of entreaty that have preceded it, and hails Jesus Christ glorified on His throne in the heights of heaven! “For Thou only art holy: Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father.” Each evening too, in those early times, the Christian offered another hymn, less known among ourselves, but scarcely less beautiful. It too was addressed to Jesus in His majesty!

“Hail! gladdening Light, of His pure glory poured,
Who is the Immortal Father, heavenly, blest,
Holiest of Holies—Jesus Christ our Lord!
Now we are come to the sun's hour of rest,
The lights of evening round us shine,
We hymn the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit Divine!
Worthiest art Thou at all times to be sung
With undefiled tongue,
Son of our God, Giver of life, Alone!
Therefore in all the world, Thy glories, Lord, they own.”

A yet earlier illustration is afforded by the ode with which the Alexandrian Clement concludes his *Pædagogus*.

It celebrates our Lord, as "the Dispenser of wisdom," "the Support of the suffering," the "Lord of immortality," the "Saviour of mortals," "the Mighty Son," "the God of Peace." It thrice insists on the "sincerity" of the praise thus offered Him. It concludes :—

Sing we sincerely
The Mighty Son ;
We, the peaceful choir,
We, the Christ-begotten ones,
We, the people of sober life,
Sing we together the God of peace !

Not may we forget a hymn which, in God's good providence, has been endeared to all of us from childhood. In its present form the *Te Deum* is clearly Western, whether it belongs to the age of St. Augustine, with whose baptism it is connected by the popular tradition, or, as is probable, to a later period. But we can scarcely doubt that portions of it are of Eastern origin, and that they carry us up well-nigh to the sub-apostolic period. The *Te Deum* is at once a song of praise, a creed, and a supplication. In each capacity it is addressed to our Lord. In the *Te Deum* how profound is the adoration offered to Jesus, whether as One of the Most Holy Three, or more especially in His Personal distinctness as the King of Glory, the Father's Everlasting Son ! How touching are the supplications which remind Him that when He became Incarnate "He did not abhor the Virgin's womb," that when His death-agony was passed He "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers !" How passionate are the pleadings that He would "help

His servants whom He has redeemed with His most precious blood," that He would "make them to be numbered with His saints in glory everlasting!" Much of this language is of the highest antiquity; all of it is redolent with the fragrance of the earliest Church; and as we English Christians use it still in our daily services, we may rejoice to feel that it unites us altogether in spirit, and to a great extent in the letter, with the Church of the first three centuries.

The Apostolical Constitutions contain ancient doxologies which associate Jesus Christ with the Father as "inhabiting the praises of Israel," after the manner of the Gloria Patri. And the Kyrie Eleison, that germinal type of supplication, of which the countless litanies of the modern Church are only the varied expansions, is undoubtedly sub-apostolic. Together with the Tersanctus and the Gloria in Excelsis it shows very remarkably, by its presence in the Eucharistic Office, how ancient and deeply rooted was the Christian practice of prayer to Jesus Christ. For the Eucharist has a double aspect; it is a gift from heaven to earth, but it is also an offering from earth to heaven. In the Eucharist the Christian Church offers to the Eternal Father the "merits and death of His Son Jesus Christ;" since Christ Himself has said, "Do this in remembrance of Me."



Hope in a Future Essential

"That ye may abound in hope."—ROMANS XV. 13.

THERE is one element, or condition of national hope, with which no nation can dispense. A nation must have its eye upon a future, more or less defined, but fairly within the apparent scope of its grasp. Hope is the soul of moral vitality; and any man, or society of men who would live, in the moral sense of life, must be looking forward to something. You will scarcely suspect me, my brethren, of seeking to disparage the great principle of tradition; that principle to which the Christian Church owes her sacred volume itself, no less than her treasure of formulated doctrine, and the structural conditions and sacramental sources of her life; that principle to which each generation of human society is deeply and inevitably indebted for the accumulated social and political experiences of the generations before it. Precious indeed, to every wise man, to every association of true-hearted and generous men, must ever be the inheritance of the past. Yet, what is the past without the future? What is memory when unaccompanied by hope? Look at the case of the

single soul. Is it not certain that a life of high earnest purpose will die outright, if it is permitted to sink into the placid reverie of perpetual retrospect, if the man of action becomes the mere "laudator temporis acti?" How is the force of moral life developed and strengthened? Is it not by successive conscious efforts to act and to suffer at the call of duty? Must not any moral life dwindle and fade away if it be not reaching forward to a standard higher, truer, purer, stronger than its own? Will not the struggles, the sacrifices, the self-conquests even of a great character in by-gone years, if they now occupy its whole field of vision, only serve to consummate its ruin? As it dotingly fondles them in memory, will it not be stiffened by conceit into a moral petrification, or consigned by sloth to the successive processes of moral decomposition? Has not the Author of our life so bound up its deepest instincts and yearnings with His own eternity, that no blessings in the past would be blessings to us, if they were utterly unconnected with the future? So it is also in the case of a society. The greatest of all societies among men at this moment is the Church of Jesus Christ. Is she sustained only by the deeds and writings of her saints and martyrs in a distant past, or only by her reverent trustful sense of the Divine Presence which blesses her in the actual present? Does she not resolutely pierce the gloom of the future, and confidently reckon upon new struggles and triumphs on earth, and, beyond these, upon a home in Heaven, wherein she will enjoy rest and victory,—a rest that

no trouble can disturb, a victory that no reverse can forfeit?

Nor is it otherwise with that association of men which we call a nation, the product of race, or the product of circumstances, the product in any case of a Providential Will, Which welds into a common whole, for the purposes of united action and of reciprocal influence, a larger or smaller number of human beings. A nation must have a future before it; a future which can rebuke its despondency and can direct its enthusiasm; a future for which it will prepare itself; a future which it will aspire to create or to control. Unless it would barter away the vigorous nerve of true patriotism for the feeble pedantry of a soulless archæology, a nation cannot fall back altogether upon the centuries which have flattered its ambition, or which have developed its material well-being. Something it must propose to itself as an object to be compassed in the coming time, something which is as yet beyond it. It will enlarge its frontier; or it will develop its commercial resources; or it will extend its schemes of colonization; or it will erect its overgrown colonies into independent and friendly states; or it will bind the severed sections of a divided race into one gigantic nationality that shall awe, if it do not subdue the nations around. Or perchance its attention will be concentrated on the improvement of its social life, and on the details of its internal legislation. It will extend the range of civil privileges; it will broaden the basis of government; it will provide additional encourage-

ments to, and safeguards for, public morality; it will steadily aim at bettering the condition of the classes who are forced, beyond others, to work and to suffer. Thankful it may well be to the Author of all goodness for the enjoyment of past blessings; but the spirit of a true thankfulness is ever and very nearly allied to the energy of hope. Self-complacent a nation cannot be, unless it would perish. Woe indeed to the country which dares to assume that it has reached its zenith, and that it can achieve or attempt no more!

Now, Israel as a nation was not withdrawn from the operation of this law, which makes the anticipation of a better future of such vital importance to the common life of a people. Israel indeed had been cradled in an atmosphere of physical and political miracle. Her great lawgiver could point to the event which gave her national existence as to an event unique in human history. No subsequent vicissitudes would obliterate the memory of the story which Israel treasured in her inmost memory, the story of the stern Egyptian bondage followed by the triumphant Exodus. How retrospective throughout is the sacred literature of Israel! It is not enough that the great deliverance should be accurately chronicled; it must be expanded, applied, insisted on in each of its many bearings and aspects by the lawgiver who directed and who described it; it must be echoed on from age to age, in the stern expostulations of Prophets, and in the plaintive or jubilant songs of Psalmists. Certainly the greater portion of the Old

Testament is history. Israel was guided by the contents of her sacred books to live in much grateful reflection upon the past. Certainly, it was often her sin and her condemnation that she practically lost sight of all that had been done for her. Yet if ever it were permissible to forget the future, Israel, it should seem, might have forgotten it. She might have closed her eyes against the dangers which threatened her from beyond the Lebanon, from beyond the Eastern and the Southern desert, from beyond the Western sea, from within her own borders, from the streets and the palaces of her capital. She might have abandoned herself in an ecstasy of perpetuated triumph to the voices of her poets, and to the rolls of her historians. But there was One Who had loved Israel as a child, and had called His infant people out of Egypt, and had hallowed it with His Name, and His Law, and had so fenced its life around by protective institutions, that, as the ages passed, neither strange manners nor hostile thought should avail to corrupt what He had so bountifully given to them. Was He forgetful to provide for and to direct that instinct of expectation, without which as a nation it could not live? Had He, indeed, not thus provided, Israel might have struggled with vain energy after ideals such as were those of the nations around her. She might have spent herself, like the Tyrian or Sidonian merchant, for a large commerce; she might have watched eagerly and fiercely, like the Cilician pirate or like the wild sons of the desert, for the spoils of adjacent civilizations; she might have essayed to

combine, after the Greek pattern, a discreet measure of sensuality with a great activity of the speculative intellect; she might have fared as did the Babylonian, or the Persian, or the Roman; at least, she might have attempted the establishment of a world-wide tyranny around the throne of a Hebrew Belshazzar, or of a Hebrew Nero. Nor is her history altogether free from the disturbing influence of such ideals as were these; we do not forget the brigandage of the days of the Judges, or the imperial state and prowess of Solomon, or the commercial enterprise of Jehoshaphat, or the union of much intellectual activity with low moral effort which marked more than one of the Rabbinical schools. But the life and energy of the nation was not really embarked, at least in its best days, in the pursuit of these objects; their attractive influence was intermittent, transient, accidental. The expectation of Israel was steadily directed towards a future, the lustre of which would in some real sense more than eclipse her glorious past. That future was not sketched by the vain imaginings of popular aspirations; it was unveiled to the mind of the people by a long series of authoritative announcements. These announcements did not merely point to the introduction of a new state of things; they centered very remarkably upon a coming Person. God Himself vouchsafed to satisfy the instinct of hope which sustained the national life of His own chosen people; and Israel lived for the expected Messiah.

But Israel, beside being a civil polity, was a theocracy;

she was not merely a nation, she was a Church. In Israel religion was not, as with the peoples of pagan antiquity, a mere attribute or function of the national life. Religion was the very soul and substance of the life of Israel: Israel was a Church encased, embodied in a political constitution. Hence it was that the most truly national aspirations in Israel were her religious aspirations. God was the first thought in the mind of Israel. The existence, the presence of One Supreme, Living, Personal Being, Who alone exists necessarily and of Himself; Who sustains the life of all besides Himself; before Whom all that is not Himself is but a shadow and vanity; from Whose sanctity there streams forth upon the conscience of man that moral law which is the light of human life; and in Whose mercy all men, especially the afflicted, the suffering, the poor, may, if they will, find a gracious and long-suffering Patron—this was the substance of the first great conviction of the people of Israel. Dependent on that conviction was another. The eye of Israel was not merely opened towards the heavens, it was alive to the facts of the moral human world. Israel was conscious of the presence and power of sin. The Jew knew that sin was the secret of human sorrow. He could not forget the sin if he would; for before his eyes, the importunate existence and the destructive force of sin were inexorably pictured in the ritual. He witnessed daily sacrifices for sin; he witnessed the sacrifice of sacrifices which was offered on the Day of Atonement, and by which the “nation of religion,” impersonated by its High Priest,

solemnly laid its sins upon the sacrificial victim, and bore the blood of atonement into the Presence-chamber of God. Then the moral law sounded in his ears; he knew that he had not obeyed it. If the Jew could not be sure that the blood of bulls and goats really effected his reconciliation with God; if his own prophets told him that moral obedience was more precious in God's sight than sacrificial oblations; if the ritual, interpreted as it was by the Decalogue, created yearnings within him which it could not satisfy, and deepened a sense of pollution which of itself it could not relieve; yet at least the Jew could not ignore sin or think lightly of it, or essay to gild it over with the levities of raillery. He could not screen from his sight its native blackness, and justify it to himself by a philosophical theory which should represent it as inevitable, or as being something else than what it is. The ritual forced sin in upon his daily thoughts; the ritual inflicted it upon his imagination as being a terrible and present fact; and so it entered into and coloured his whole conception alike of national and of individual life. Thus was it that this sense of sin moulded all true Jewish hopes, all earnest Jewish anticipations of the national future. A future which promised political victory or deliverance, but which offered no relief to the sense of sin, would have failed to meet the better aspirations, and to cheer the real heart of a people which, amid whatever unfaithfulness to its measure of light, yet had a true knowledge of God, and was keenly alive to the fact and to the effects of

moral evil. And He Who, by His earlier revelations, had Himself made the moral needs of Israel so deep, and had bidden the hopes of Israel rise so high, vouchsafed to meet the one, and to offer a plenary satisfaction to the other, in the doctrine of an expected Messiah.

The Messianic belief was in truth interwoven with the deepest life of the people. The promises which formed and fed this belief are distributed along nearly the whole range of the Jewish annals; while the belief rests originally upon sacred traditions, which carry us up to the very cradle of the human family, although they are preserved in the sacred Hebrew Books. It is of importance to inquire whether this general Messianic belief included any definite convictions respecting the personal rank of the Being Who was its object.


In the gradual unfolding of the Messianic doctrine, three stages of development may be noted within the limits of the Hebrew Canon, and a fourth beyond it. Of these the first appears to end with Moses. The Protevangelium, contains a broad indeterminate prediction of a victory of humanity over the Evil Principle that had seduced man to his fall. The "seed of the woman" is to bruise the serpent's head. With the lapse of years this blessing, at first so general and indefinite, is narrowed down to something in store for the posterity of Shem, and subsequently for the descendants of Abraham. In Abraham's seed all the families of the earth are to be blessed. Already within this bright but generally indefinite prospect of deliverance and blessing

we begin to discern the Advent of a Personal Deliverer. The characteristics of this Personal Messiah emerge gradually in successive predictions. The dying Jacob looks forward to a Shiloh as One to Whom of right belongs the legal and legislative authority, and to Whom the obedient nations will be gathered. Balaam sings of the Star That will come out of Jacob, and the Sceptre That will rise out of Israel. This is something more than an anticipation of the reign of David ; it manifestly points to the glory and power of a Higher Royalty. Moses foretells a Prophet Who would in a later age be raised up from among the Israelites like unto himself. This Prophet accordingly was to be the Lawgiver, the Teacher, the Ruler, the Deliverer of Israel. If the prophetic order at large is included in this prediction, it is only as being personified in the Last and Greatest of the Prophets, in the One Prophet Who was to reveal perfectly the mind of God, and Whose words were to be implicitly obeyed. During this primary period we do not find implicit assertions of the Divinity of Messiah. But in that predicted victory over the Evil One, in that blessing which is to be shed on all the families of the earth ; in that rightful sway over the gathered peoples ; in the absolute and perfect teaching of that Prophet Who is to be like the great Lawgiver while yet He transcends him,—must we not trace a predicted destiny which reaches higher than the known limits of the highest human energy? Is it not this early prophetic language only redeemed from the imputation of exaggeration or vagueness, by the

point and justification which are secured to it through the more explicit disclosures of a succeeding age ?

The second stage of the Messianic doctrine centres in the reigns of David and Solomon. The form of the prophecy is here as elsewhere suggested by the period at which it is uttered. When mankind was limited to a single family, the hope of the future had lain in the seed of the woman: the Patriarchal age had looked forward to a descendant of Abraham; the Mosaic to a Prophet and a Legislator. In like manner the age of the Jewish monarchy, in its bloom of youth and prowess, was bidden fix its eye upon an Ideal David Who was to be the King of the future of the world. Not that the colouring or form of the prophetic announcement lowered its scope to the level of a Jewish or of a human monarchy. The promise of a King to David and to his house *for ever*,—a promise on which, we know, the great psalmist rested at the hour of his death (2 Sam. xxiii. 5)—could not be fulfilled by any mere continuation of his dynasty on the throne of Jerusalem. It implied, as both David and Solomon saw, some Superhuman Royalty. Of this Royalty the Messianic Psalms present us with a series of pictures, each of which illustrates a distinct aspect of its dignity, while all either imply or assert the Divinity of the King. In the second psalm, for instance, Messiah is associated with the Lord of Israel as His Anointed Son, while against the authority of Both the heathen nations are rising in rebellion. Messiah's inheritance is to include all heathendom; His Sonship is not merely theocratic or

ethical, but Divine. All who trust in Him are blessed ; all who incur His wrath must perish with a sharp and swift destruction. In the first recorded prayer of the Church of Christ (Acts iv. 26), in St. Paul's sermon at Antioch of Pisidia, in the argument which opens the Epistle to the Hebrews, this psalm is quoted in such senses, that we cannot doubt the belief of the Jewish Church respecting it. The forty-fifth psalm is a picture of the peaceful and glorious union of the King Messiah with His mystical Bride, the Church of redeemed humanity. Messiah is introduced as a Divine King reigning among men. His form is of more than human beauty ; His lips overflow with grace ; God has blessed Him for ever, and has anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows. But Messiah is also directly addressed as God ; He is seated upon an everlasting throne. Neither of these psalms can be adapted without exegetical violence to the circumstances of Solomon or of any other king of ancient Israel ; and the New Testament interprets the picture of the Royal Epithalamium, no less than that of the Royal triumph over the insurgent heathen, of the one true King Messiah. In another psalm the character and extent of this Messianic sovereignty are more distinctly pictured (Psa. lxxii.). Solomon, when at the height of his power, sketches a Superhuman King, ruling an empire which in its character and its compass altogether transcends his own. The extremest boundaries of the kingdom of Israel melt away before the gaze of the Psalmist. The



new kingdom reaches from "sea to sea, and from the flood unto the world's end." It reaches from each frontier of the Promised Land, to the remotest region of the known world, in the opposite quarter. From the Mediterranean it extends to the ocean which washes the shores of Eastern Asia, from the Euphrates to the utmost West. At the feet of its mighty Monarch, all who are most inaccessible to the arms or to the influence of Israel, hasten to tender their voluntary submission. The wild sons of the desert, the merchants of Tarshish in the then distant Spain, the islanders of the Mediterranean, the Arab chiefs, the wealthy Nubians, are foremost in proffering their homage and fealty. But all kings are at last to fall down in submission before the Ruler of the new kingdom; all nations are to do Him service. His empire is to be co-extensive with the world; it is also to be co-enduring with time. His empire is to be spiritual; it is to confer peace on the world, but by righteousness. The King will Himself secure righteous judgment, salvation, deliverance, redemption, to His subjects. The needy, the afflicted, the friendless, will be the special objects of His tender care. His appearance in the world will be like the descent "of the rain on the mown grass;" the true life of man seems to have been killed out, but it is yet capable of being restored by Him. He Himself, it is hinted, will be out of sight; but His *Name* will endure for ever; His Name will "propagate;" and men shall be blessed in Him, to the end of time. This King is immortal; He is also all-knowing and almighty.

“Omniscience alone can hear the cry of every human heart ; Omnipotence alone can bring deliverance to every human sufferer.” Look at one more representation of this Royalty, that to which our Lord Himself referred in dealing with His Jewish adversaries (St. Matt. xxii. 41). David describes his great descendant Messiah as his “Lord” (Psa. cx. i). Messiah is sitting on the right hand of Jehovah, as the partner of His dignity. Messiah reigns upon a throne which impiety alone could assign to any human monarch ; He is to reign until His enemies are made His footstool. He is Ruler now, even among His unsubdued opponents. In the day of His power, His people offer themselves willingly to His service ; they are clad not in earthly armour, but in the “beauties of holiness.” Messiah is Priest as well as King. He is an everlasting Priest of that older order which had been honoured by the father of the faithful. Who is this everlasting Priest, this resistless King, reigning thus amidst His enemies and commanding the inmost hearts of His servants ? He is David’s Descendant ; the Pharisees knew that truth. But He is also David’s Lord. How could He be both if He was merely human ? The belief of Christendom can alone answer the question which our Lord addressed to the Pharisees. The Son of David is David’s Lord, because He is God ; the Lord of David is David’s Son, because He is God Incarnate.

These are but samples of that rich store of Messianic prophecy which belongs to the second Davidic period. The third period extends from the reign of Uzziah to

the close of the Hebrew Canon in Malachi. Here Messianic prophecy reaches its climax: it expands into the fullest particularity of detail respecting Messiah's Human life; it mounts to the highest assertions of His Divinity. Isaiah is the richest mine of Messianic prophecy in the Old Testament. Messiah, especially designated as "the Servant of God," is the central figure in the prophecies of Isaiah. Both in Isaiah and in Jeremiah the titles of Messiah are often and pointedly expressive of His true Humanity. He is the Fruit of the Earth; He is the Rod out of the stem of Jesse; He is the Branch or sprout of David; He is called by God from His mother's womb; God hath put His Spirit upon Him. He is anointed to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive. He is a Prophet; His work is greater than that of any prophet of Israel; He is also given as a Light to the Gentiles, as the Salvation of God unto the ends of the earth. Such is His spiritual power as Prophet and Legislator, that He will write the law of the Lord, not upon tables of stone, but upon the hearts and consciences of the true Israel. In Zechariah, as in David, He is an enthroned Priest, but it is the Kingly glory of Messiah which predominates throughout the prophetic representations of this period, and in which His Super-human Nature is most distinctly suggested. According to Jeremiah, the Branch of Righteousness, who is to be raised up among the posterity of David, is a King who will reign and prosper and execute judgment and justice

in the earth. According to Isaiah, this expected King, the Root of Jesse, "will stand for an ensign of the people;" the Gentiles will seek Him; He will be the rallying-point of the world's hopes, the true centre of its government. Righteousness, equity, swift justice, strict faithfulness will mark His administration; He will not be dependent, like a human magistrate, upon the evidence of His senses; He will not judge after the sight of His eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of His ears; He will rely upon the infallibility of a perfect moral insight. Beneath the shadow of His throne all that is by nature savage, proud, and cruel among the sons of men will learn the lessons of humility, tenderness, and love. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." The reign of moral light, of spiritual graces, of innocence, of simplicity, will succeed to the reign of physical and brute force; the old sources of moral danger will become harmless through His protecting presence and blessing; "the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den;" and in the end "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Daniel is taught that at "the anointing of the Most Holy"—after a defined period—God will "finish the transgressions," and "make an end of sins," and "make reconciliation for iniquity," and "bring in everlasting righteousness." Zechariah, too,

especially points out the moral and spiritual characteristics of the reign of King Messiah. The founder of an Eastern dynasty must ordinarily wade through blood and slaughter to the steps of his throne, and must maintain his authority by force. But the "daughter of Jerusalem" beholds her King coming to her, "just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass." "The chariots are cut off from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem;" the King "speaks peace unto the heathen;" the battle bow is broken; and yet His dominion extends from "sea to sea, and from the river towards the end of the earth."

In harsh and utter contrast, as it seems, to this representation of Messiah as a Jewish King, the moral conqueror and ruler of the world, there is another representation of Him which belongs to the Davidic period as well as to that of Isaiah. Messiah had been typified in David persecuted by Saul and humbled by Absalom, no less truly than that He had been typified in Solomon surrounded by all the glory of his imperial court. If Messiah reigns in the forty-fifth or in the seventy-second Psalms, He suffers, nay He is pre-eminent among the suffering, in the twenty-second. We may suppose that the suffering Just One who is described by David, reaches the climax of anguish; but the portrait of an archetypal Sorrow has been even more minutely touched by the hand of Isaiah. In both writers, however, the deepest humiliations and woes are confidently treated as the prelude to an assured victory. The Psalmist passes, from what is little less than an

elaborate programme of the historical circumstances of the Crucifixion, to an announcement that by these unexampled sufferings the heathen will be converted, and all the kindreds of the Gentiles will be brought to adore the true God. The prophet describes the Servant of God as "despised and rejected of men" (Isa. liii. 3). His sorrows are viewed with general satisfaction; they are accounted a just punishment for His own supposed crimes. Yet in reality He bears our infirmities, and carries our sorrows. His wounds are due to our transgressions; His stripes have a healing virtue for us; His suffering and death are a trespass offering; on Him is laid the iniquity of all. If in Isaiah the inner meaning of the tragedy is more fully insisted on, the picture itself is not less vivid than that of the Psalter. The suffering Servant stands before His judges; "His Visage is so marred more than any man, and His Form more than the sons of men" (Isa. lii. 14). Like a lamb, innocent, defenceless, dumb, He is led forth to the slaughter; "He is cut off from the land of the living." Yet the Prophet pauses at His grave to say that He "shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied," that God "will divide Him a portion with the great," and that He will Himself "divide the spoil with the strong." And all this is to follow "because He hath poured out His soul unto death." His death is to be the condition of His victory; His death is the destined instrument whereby He will achieve His mediatorial reign of glory.

Place yourselves, brethren, by an effort of intellectual

sympathy, in the position of the men who heard this language while its historical fulfilment, so familiar to us Christians, was as yet future. How self-contradictory must it have appeared to them, how inexplicable, how full of paradox! That our Lord should actually have submitted Himself to the laws and agencies of disgrace and discomfiture, and should have turned His deepest humiliation into the very weapon of His victory, is not the least among the evidences of His Divine power and mission. And the prophecy which so paradoxically dared to say that He would in such fashion both suffer and reign, assuredly and implicitly contained within itself another and a higher truth. Such majestic control over the ordinary conditions of failure betokened something more than an extraordinary man, something not less than a distinctly Superhuman Personality. Taken in connection with the redemptive powers, the world-wide sway, the spiritual heart-controlling teaching, so distinctly ascribed to Him, this prediction that the Christ would die, and would convert the whole world by death, prepares us for the most explicit statements of the prophets respecting His Person. It is no surprise to a mind which has dwelt steadily on the destiny which prophecy thus assigns to Messiah, that Isaiah and Zechariah should speak of Him as Divine. We will not lay stress upon the fact, that in Isaiah the Redeemer of Israel and of men is constantly asserted to be the Creator, Who by Himself will save His people. Significant as such language is as to the bent of the Divine mind, it is not properly

Messianic. But in that great prophecy (Isa. ix. 6) the true and full sense of which is so happily suggested to us by its place in the Church services for Christmas Day, the "Son" who is given to Israel receives a four-fold Name. He is a Wonder—Counsellor, or Wonderful, above all earthly beings ; He possesses a Nature which man cannot fathom ; and He thus shares and unfolds the Divine Mind. He is the Father of the everlasting Age, or of Eternity. He is the Prince of Peace. Above all, He is expressly named, the Mighty God. Conformably with this Jeremiah calls Him Jehovah-Tsidkenu, as Isaiah has called Him Emmanuel. Micah speaks of His eternal pre-existence, as Isaiah has spoken of His endless reign. Daniel predicts that His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away. Zechariah terms Him the Fellow or Equal of the Lord of Hosts, and refers to His Incarnation and still more clearly to His Passion as being that of Jehovah Himself. (Zech. xiii. 7.) Haggai implies His Divinity by foretelling that His presence will make the glory of the second temple greater than the glory of the first. Malachi points to Him as the Angel of the Covenant, as Jehovah, Whom Israel was seeking, and Who would suddenly "come to His temple," as the Sun of Righteousness. Read this language as a whole ; read it by the light of the great doctrine which it attests, and which in turn illuminates it, the doctrine of a Messiah Divine as well as Human ; all is natural, consistent, full of point and meaning.

The last stage of the Messianic doctrine begins only

after the close of the Hebrew Canon. Among the Jews of Alexandria the hope of a Messiah seems to have fallen into the background. The Messianic belief had two aspects corresponding respectively to the political and to the religious yearnings of the people of Israel. If such a faith was a relief to a personal or national sense of sin, it was also a relief to a sense of political disappointment or degradation. And keen consciousness of political failure became a dominant sentiment among the Jewish people, during the centuries immediately preceding our Lord's Incarnation. With some fitful glimpses of national life, as under the Asmoneans, the Jews of the Restoration passed from the yoke of one heathen tyranny to that of another. As in succession they served the Persian monarchs, the Syrian Greeks, the Idumæan kings and the Roman magistrate, the Jewish people cast an eye more and more wistfully to the political hopes which might be extracted from their ancient and accepted Messianic belief. They learned to pass more and more lightly over the prophetic pictures of a Messiah robed in moral majesty, of a Messiah relieving the woes of the whole human family, of a Messiah suffering torture and shame in the cause of truth. They dwelt more and more eagerly upon the pictures of His world-wide conquest and imperial sway, and they construed those promises of coming triumph in the most earthly and secular sense; they looked for a Jewish Alexander or for a Jewish Cæsar. The New Testament exhibits the popular form of the Messianic doctrine, as it lay in the minds of Gali-

leans, of Samaritans, of the men of Jerusalem. It is plain how deeply, when our Lord appeared, the hope of a Deliverer had sunk into the heart both of peasant and townsman ; yet it is equally plain how earthly was the taint which had passed over the popular apprehension of this glorious hope, since its first full proclamation in the days of the prophets. Doubtless there were saints, like the aged Simeon, whose eyes longed sore for the Divine Christ foretold in the great age of the Hebrew prophecy. But generally speaking, the piety of the enslaved Jew had become little else than a wrong-headed patriotism. His religious expectations had been taken possession of by his civic passions, and were liable at any moment to be placed at the service of a purely political agitation. Israel as a theocracy was sacrificed in his thought to Israel as a state ; and he was willing to follow any adventurer into the wilderness or across the Jordan, if only there was a remote prospect of bringing the Messianic predictions to bear against the hated soldiery and police of Rome. A religious creed is always impoverished when it is degraded to serve political purposes ; and belief in the Divinity of Messiah naturally waned and died away, when the highest functions attributed to Him were merely those of a successful general or of an able statesman. The Apostles themselves, at one time, looked mainly or only for a temporal prince ; and the people who were willing to hail Jesus as King Messiah, and to conduct Him in royal pomp to the gates of the holy City, had so lost sight of the real

eminence which Messiahship involved, that when He claimed to be God, they endeavoured to stone Him for blasphemy, and this claim of His was in point of fact the crime for which their leaders persecuted Him to death.

And yet when Jesus presented Himself to the Jewish people, He did not condescend to sanction the misbelief of the time, or to swerve from the tenor of the ancient revelation. He claimed to satisfy the national hopes of Israel by a prospect which would identify the future of Israel with that of the world. He professed to answer to the full, unmutilated, spiritual expectations of prophets and of righteous men. They had desired to see and had not seen Him, to hear and had not heard Him. Long ages had passed, and the hope of Israel was still unfulfilled. Psalmists had turned back in accents well-nigh of despair to the great deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, when the Lord brake the heads of the dragons in the waters, and brought fountains out of the hard rock. Prophets had been assured that at last the vision of age should "speak and not lie," and had been bidden "though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Each victory, each deliverance pre-figured Messiah's work; each saint, each hero, foreshadowed some separate ray of His personal glory; each disaster gave strength to the mighty cry for His intervention; He was the true soul of the history, as well as of the poetry and prophecy of Israel. And so much was demanded of Him, so superhuman were the

proportions of His expected actions, that He would have disappointed the poetry and history, no less than the prophecy, of Israel, had He been merely one of the sons of men. Yet when at last, in the fulness of time He came, that He might satisfy the desire of the nations, He was rejected by a stiff-necked generation, because He was true to the highest and brightest anticipations of His Advent. A Christ who had contented himself with the debased Messianic idea of the Herodian period, might have precipitated an insurrection against the Roman rule, and might have antedated, after whatever intermediate struggles, the fall of Jerusalem. Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be the Divine Messiah of David and of Isaiah ; and therefore He died upon the cross, to achieve, not the political enfranchisement of Palestine, but the spiritual redemption of humanity.

THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD, p. 73.

Faith in a Holy Ghost

“Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?”—ACTS xix. 2.

BELIEF in and communion with the Holy Spirit rescues the life of Christ in the thought of a living Christian from an exclusively historical way of looking at it. For the Holy Spirit perpetually fulfils Christ's promise in the Church and in souls,—“He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you.” There are two prominent features in a spiritual estimate of the Life of Jesus. First, the Spirit weans Christian thought from too exclusive an attention to the outward, and concentrates it upon the inward features. It is not, that anything which can illustrate That precious Life is unimportant, God forbid; but, that the transient circumstances in which it was set are less important than its imperishable spirit and substance. . . . Thus the life of Christ is transferred by the Spirit from the region of merely historical studies, where it is appreciated only by the natural intelligence, to the region of spiritual experiences, where it speaks directly to the soul. For the Spirit forces in upon us, His children, the habitual recollection that Christ is what He was. The interest

of His life is seen to consist in this, that it is the Life of One with Whom we have daily, hourly converse. To the living soul, the Nativity, the Sermon on the Mount, the Last Discourse, the Washing of the Disciples' Feet, the Agony, the Cross, the Resurrection, do not belong only to a distant history from which we are severed by the chasm of eighteen centuries of political, social, and intellectual change. For the pupils of the Spirit those centuries do not exist; the Gospel mysteries are facts, perpetuated independently of their temporal setting, in the kingdom of the Redemption; and year by year, and day by day, we kneel before the Manger, and the Cross, and the empty Sepulchre, as before the mysteries of a kingdom which has its place in time while yet transcending it. For the children of the Spirit the Eternal Christ lives now, not less truly than eighteen hundred years ago. Did He not say, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you,"—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?" And how? Of what kind was this world-enduring Presence to be? Politicians are present after death, by the laws or dynasties which they have established. The intellectual survive by the force of the ideas to which they have given currency. The good live yet more nobly by the persuasive beauty of their examples. Nay, the great criminals who have disgraced humanity, are too often present, energetically present, in the memory and imitation of after-generations. Was the presence of Christ to be of this description—a presence not of His

Person, but of the natural effects of His historical appearance,—differing in degree, but not in kind, from the posthumous presence of kings and wits, and eminently good or bad characters? No. It was to be a real, but a spiritual Presence. It was not to be, as some Socinianizing theologians have imagined, a Presence of the Spirit, substituted for the Presence of the Saviour. The Spirit is emphatically the Spirit of Christ, because He is the minister of Christ's supersensuous Presence. The second Adam is Himself a "quickening Spirit." The promise "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you," is explained by that other promise, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." Christ is eminently present with us by the presence of His Spirit. We do not see Him, but He has not left us. He is with us invisibly, but as truly as He was in the streets of Jerusalem, or on the shores of the Lake of Galilee; and the children of the Spirit see Him, contemplate Him, cling to Him, as did the disciples of old. The life of Christ, in short, is of present interest, as being the Life of our once visible but ever-living and present Lord; and to fail to perceive this truth, is to be practically ignorant of the effective Presence of the Spirit; it is to have heard to no real purpose whether there be any Holy Ghost.

Again; belief in the Holy Ghost rescues us from a merely earthly and materialized estimate of the Christian Church. The Church of Christ has of course an earthly

side. She enters into human history, and her annals are intertwined with those of the kingdom of this world; nay, more, they have been at times chequered with degradation and crime. She interpenetrates natural society; and she has relations to civil governments, which are matters of ordinary business and discussion. Her ministers are like other men, in their individual capacity, liable to infirmities and to error, and depending for their usefulness very largely upon their personal character and individual acquirements. Her doctrines are stated in human language; sometimes in the very language which mere natural thought has employed in the service of human philosophy. Her Scriptures, at first sight, are like any other book; they are poetry, history, ethics, correspondence. Her sacraments are, viewed on their outward side, the simplest of rites;—a little water sprinkled on an infant brow;—a little bread and wine dealt out in the early morning to a company of kneeling and silent guests.

Brethren, there are many souls in our day who lack the spiritual sense which enables Christians to see more than this in the Church of Christ. Their eye rests upon the surface. They mistake the kingdom of the Spirit for a merely human organization, patronized by the State in the interests of civil order, education, and philanthropy. They are exclusively concerned with the mere outward trappings of the Church's temporal position, with the exact amount of its political influence in the country, with its relation to the Government of the day, with the

incomes of its chief pastors, and their seats in the Legislature;—just as if these precarious accessories of its existing position in England were of the essence of that world-embracing kingdom which was set up in the world on the Day of Pentecost. Men speak sometimes as if the loss of these things would be the loss of our all; as if there were no such thing as a Church which was not richly endowed and honourably recognized by the civil authority. Far be it from us to speak unthankfully of the blessings of a national recognition of religion. Yet those blessings may be too dearly purchased by the culpable betrayal of strictly spiritual powers to hands utterly uncommissioned by Christ, if Cæsar persists in claiming the things of God. And, apart from this, it is easy to see that the whole current of modern legislation is setting steadily, and it may be is presently about to set with accelerated speed, in a direction unfavourable to any State recognition of religion. Is this a reason for despair to those who heartily believe in and love the Church of England, as a true portion of that kingdom which God's Spirit organized eighteen centuries ago, and which, amid all that is human and sinful and erroneous and disappointing in it, He tenants at this moment? No, assuredly. The Church is not a mere material corporation, but a spiritual society. Surely her indefeasible powers would only be put forth with greater energy, when temporal succour was withdrawn; and it may be that she would gain in moral vigour, in clearness of faith, in intensity and unitedness

of purpose, what she might have lost in the countenance of the powerful, and in the wealth bequeathed to her by past generations of her children. One thing only need we fear;—our own blindness or disloyalty to her true temper and requirements. An infidel writer of the last century observed, that the main hope of a destruction of Christianity throughout Europe lay in the prevalence of two vices among the Christian clergy—ambition and self-indulgence. Oh, most salutary and precious warning! for are not these two vices the most emphatic contradictions of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom; in which self-denial is the soul of all the highest virtue, in which high office means only the liability to a stricter judgment at the great day of reckoning? We have nothing to fear, brethren, for the future, come what may, if only as we live in the Spirit, so also we walk in the Spirit. We have everything to hope, if in our thoughts about and deeds towards the Church of God, we bear in mind that she is something better worth our labour and our love than any polity of this world, since we have heard indeed that there is a Holy Ghost Who sanctifies her.

Once more, there is such a thing as materialized worship; and this is a danger from which those who believe most earnestly in the realities of the kingdom of the Spirit do not always escape.

That the sense of beauty may be appealed to in order to win the soul to God, is a principle consecrated not merely by the express language, but by the example of

Scripture. Look, for instance, at the book of the Prophet Isaiah. Isaiah is a great teacher of moral, spiritual, doctrinal truth. But the instrument by which Isaiah expresses his thought is a poetry so beautiful, that mere natural good taste, whether it be religious or not, cannot choose but admire it. It is, of course, possible to read Isaiah only for the sake of his poetry, and to mistake an enthusiastic admiration of his poetry for a spiritual interest in his teaching. But it may be presumed that if the æsthetic attractions of Isaiah's poetry were likely to overshadow, instead of recommending the truth which it enshrined, Isaiah might have been guided to teach the people of Israel in a series of dry propositions, like those of Euclid, whose prosaic uniformity should have effectually repelled any interest whatever of an æsthetic description. It is obvious that whether music, or painting, or poetry, or sculpture, be enlisted in the service of God, the advantages and the risks are the same. It is possible to make each of these arts a hand-maid of spiritual truth ; it is possible in each case to be so fascinated by the graces of the servant, as to forget the mistress whom she serves.

Now it seems to be the true and generous instinct of an earnest piety, to deem no measure of artistic beauty too great for the embellishment of the temples and of the service of Christ. The genuine Christian spirit is not represented as to this matter by the narrow prejudices of the Puritan tradition. Even in the Catacombs, the suffering Church already gave of her best to the Lord Who had

bought her, as out of the fulness of her grateful heart. Nor is there any real connection between spirituality of mind and that particular slovenliness, which is sometimes termed "simplicity," and which is in too many cases, even now, the leading characteristic of the public services of our churches. But this truth should not blind us to the fact that æsthetic aids to worship may, like other blessings, be perverted, by coming to be regarded more or less in the light of ends. If we find ourselves insensibly getting to attach more importance to the visible symmetry and beauty of the services of the Christian Sanctuary, than to the power which we individually possess of entering into real communion with God, and of offering to Him the best adoration of the various faculties of our souls, we ought to be very anxious. For after all, brethren, the kingdom of the Spirit is the kingdom of the supersensuous. The material beauty with which we surround our approaches to its great Eucharistic mysteries, cannot enhance their real sublimity; but alas! such beauty can, unless we are on our guard, too easily eclipse it. Let us not neglect outward order, but let our chief care be lavished on grace and truth. Let us give of our best to the Churches and the service of our God; but let us ever remember that since, even in the Realm of the Incarnation, He is a Spirit, they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Surely to realize the presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul, and in the Church, is to be anxious that that communion with God which cannot be uttered

in language, should be more constant and fervent ; that the inner realities of worship should as far transcend its outward accompaniments, as the kingdom of the Invisible transcends the world of sense. Not to feel this anxiety is to be virtually ignorant of the meaning of the Spirit's Presence ; it is practically not to have heard, at least in one départment of our spiritual existence, whether there be any Holy Ghost.

Lastly, and above all, let it be remembered that a living belief in the Holy Ghost implies a correspondent elevation of character.

It implies that a man aims at something higher than natural or conventional morality. The difference between natural systems of morality and the ethics of the New Testament is even wider than the difference between natural religion, as it is called, and the dogmatic teaching of St. John. Just as human law aims at nothing beyond the preservation and well-being of society, and leaves human conduct practically unfettered, where it does not affect social, but only individual interests ; so natural morality proceeds upon the tacit assumption that this world is our all, and that, such being the case, we should make the most of it. It is in this, as distinct from any deeper and higher sense, utilitarian. It lays stress upon those excellences which paganism recognized ; upon truthfulness, courage, justice, temperance. It certainly is not to be credited, in fairness, with such unseemly eccentricities as the doctrine which makes man's moral progress to consist chiefly in the development and

culture of a healthy animalism ; but, on the other hand, taken at its best, it is separated, by a very wide interval, from the moral standard and life set before us in the New Testament. Certainly, my brethren, before we think or speak disparagingly of natural morality, we do well to ask ourselves how far it may not rebuke us, for falling as far below, as we profess to rise above it. We do well to consider how far the courage, the justice, the severe temperance of heathens, may not rise up in judgment against us, who breathe the atmosphere of the Spirit, and who kneel before the Cross. There is such a thing as mistaking Christian privileges for Christian attainments ; and of imagining that we are what we know we ought to be, simply because we know it. There is a simple truth of morals, which a man might master without the teaching of the Holy Ghost. There are plenty of reasons for paying our bills, and for avoiding gambling, and for economizing time, and for being careful to state the truth, and for keeping clear of those evils which bring, sooner or later, their own punishments. These reasons would have had weight with considerate persons, if there had been no such event at all in the world as that of the Day of Pentecost. Let us not neglect these ethical lessons of nature ; but, as we believe in the truth of the Gospel, let us not be content with them. The Eternal Spirit, too, has set up in the world a school of morals ; and He whispers within the soul a deeper and purer code than nature dreams of. Look at the contrast between the works of our lower

self, animated by the principle of concupiscence, and the fruits of the Spirit, as St. Paul traces them in his Epistle to the Galatians. The fruits of the Spirit, you will observe, are no mere negation of the vigorous forms of wickedness which make up the catalogue of the works of the flesh. They rise higher than this, higher far. They have about them an undemonstrative, passive character, singularly contrasting with the bustling ostentation of natural morals, and implying that, in the school of the Spirit, the soul, like Mary, at the feet of Jesus, is listening to a Teacher Who has awed her into the silence which becomes self-knowledge. "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." How unnatural, men say, they are! Yes! my brethren, they are unnatural; not in the sense of contradicting nature so much as in that of transcending it. It is *not* natural to love God for His own sake, and for God's sake to love man as man; it is not natural to experience an inward sunshine which no outward troubles can overcloud, a serenity of soul which no outward provocations can really ruffle; nor in the face of continuous opposition are long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness—natural. Nature prescribes reprisals; for nature is only flesh and blood, and vehement desires, and hot passions, ordinarily controlled only by considerations of social prudence. Leaning upon nature, we may as well despair of getting beyond her as of forcing water to rise permanently above its natural level. But if we will, we

may reach a higher standard ; since we are not really left to our own resources. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. He does not merely prescribe, He transforms. He is perpetually asserting His presence by His spiritual transformations : He makes the feeble strong, and the melancholy bright, and the cold-blooded fervent, and the irascible gentle, and the uninstructed wise, and the conceited humble, and the timid unflinching. And now, as of old, "He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich He hath sent empty away." He has but a scant measure of endowments to bestow on those who find in the things of sense, in the pursuit or worship of wealth, and rank, and reputation, their deepest and most solid satisfaction. He gives Himself most fully to those who ask for Him secretly and often. O blessed gift, so bounteously given in Baptism, and then again and again repeated, of the Spirit of Christ ! We seek Him without, and we find Him within us ; we seek Him in great assemblies, and we find Him in solitude ; we seek Him in the understanding, we find Him in the heart. He enters the soul when all the doors of sense are shut ; He gives His benediction to each and all of its faculties—"Peace be unto you." The soul hears Him, it sees Him not ; the soul feels Him, yet as if insensibly ; and His presence is itself that peace of God which passeth all understanding. Henceforth enriched by His indwelling, the soul's desire is to desire nothing, its will to will for nothing, its care to care for nothing, its wealth to possess nothing, out of God, its one, its everlasting Treasure.

Brethren, this is not mysticism ; it is the experience of those who have heard within themselves that there is a Holy Ghost. This is the subjective side of lives which have been spent in the purest and most unselfish benevolence, but the secret of whose strength has escaped the notice of ordinary lookers-on. Depend upon it, the kingdom of the Spirit is as near to us as it was to our fathers ; and that no changes of human opinion can affect the irrevocable gifts of God. One day, each and all, we shall look back upon its blessed opportunities, upon its high responsibilities, with what feelings of self-reproach or of gratitude, who shall say ! Let us be wise while we may. Let us "lay not up for ourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal ; but let us lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

UNIVERSITY SERMONS, *First Series*, p. 317, etc.

Immortality

*“My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart,
and my portion for ever.”—PSALM lxxiii. 26.*

THE desire for nothing less than a heavenly country is the true key-note to the lives of the patriarchs. Immortality is the charm of the first great promise to Abraham (Gen. xv. 1). Immortality is the idea which underlies Jacob's description of this life as a pilgrimage (Gen. xlvii. 9). The patriarchs speak and act as men who sit loosely to all that makes their earthly existence dear; and as each in his turn is gathered to his people, it might well seem that their faith in immortality is traced upon their rock-hewn sepulchres. The fervent aspiration of Balaam for a death like that of the righteous is but a pointless phrase, if Balaam or Moses believed death to be extinction; and the severe laws which were promulgated by the Hebrew legislator against “charmers, consultants with familiar spirits,” and those who, as the witch of Endor, professed to call up the dead by incantations, show how profoundly a belief in the soul's immortality had in the early Sinaitic age sunk into the

heart of the people, although this belief was blended with an odious superstition. Can we wonder that not merely moral perplexities, but worship, fear, confidence in God, draw forth from the lyric soul of the Psalmists, who represent and address the faith of the people, the clear sweet exultant note, in which again and again they sing of immortality?

The authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, Divine and Infallible, is the true and sufficient basis for this doctrine in the Christian soul. He sanctions the anticipatory statements of the Old Testament, and the dogmatic enunciations of the Apostles whom He sent. His own utterances cover the whole area of what is revealed upon the subject. He thus relieves His servants of responsibility in teaching a doctrine, against which in its fulness, the unbelief and the passions of man would often have special and fierce prepossessions.

The only immortality which can aspire permanently to interest and influence mankind must assert that the life of the soul in perpetuity is an *objective* fact, altogether independent of our mental conceptions, nay, even of our moral activities. And the Gospel does *not* say to us, "Create an immortality for yourselves, by living conformably to moral order, or by thinking on the Eternal and the absolute:" it says rather, "You are already, whether you know it or not, whether you will it or not, immortal beings. You cannot now be other than immortal, for the simple reason that God has gifted you with the indestructible principle of life. Strip, then, from

the eye of your spirits, that earthly film which hides from you the real dignity, the mysterious awfulness, the vast capacities of this gift of life. Look to it, that the eternity which is inevitably before you be an eternity, not of the woe which you may merit, but of the bliss which has been won for you by the sanctity and sufferings of your Lord."


A real immortality is an objective fact: it is also the immortality of a *personal* life. . . . Such personal identity will have to be tested, first of all, by the action of memory. Memory may be suspended in sleep and distorted in idiots, but destroy it utterly and you destroy all power of appreciating personality. Even in this life, memory recalls circumstances, friends, states of mind, forms of thought, so different from those of which we have present experience, as to belong apparently to a different life from our own. Yet memory bridges over the chasm between the present and the past, and we realize our living personality as we trace the oneness of our personal history. Life, which else were a series of disconnected fragments, is thus exhibited to us by memory as an organic whole; and as we plunge into the past, and reconstruct the picture of our acts and sufferings in bygone years, we gain a clear sharp insight into the fact of our personality, which has created that history from which we are now so far removed. So, only in an infinitely greater degree, will it be hereafter. Memory, which is often thrown into the background of the inner life by the more active importunity of reason, imagination,

and will, reserves herself for those crises, when a great fear or a great sorrow bids thought, and action, and even fancy be still, that the past may return like a flood upon that soul which has lived for years only in the present. Memory waits awhile to flash forth at the appointed hour her ever latent revelations—often, as experience shows us, in the immediate anticipation of death; certainly, as the Faith assures us, at the judgment-seat of Christ. Surely she will not then review the past once for all, that she may dismiss it for ever; she will live to be the everlasting heart-ache of the lost, the everlasting joy of the redeemed. To believe in the immortality of the soul, is to believe, I do not say in the continuous activity, but in the continuous (although sometimes dormant) power of memory. Do you ask whether amid the sublimities of the future world it would be possible that we should dwell on the commonplace, insignificant life of this? Ask yourself in turn, whether any human life, which has before it, and must issue in, an eternity, be really insignificant and commonplace. Has real greatness anything whatever to do with outward circumstances? Will not the poorest cottage, the humblest, most monotonous drudgery of occupation, be everlastingly bright in a saintly memory, if that cottage have been the scene, that occupation the discipline, amid which a predestined soul has been training for the life of heaven?

Memory surely will recall ourselves to ourselves for ever. But in doing so it will recall others. Dives must remember not merely "his good things," but his "five

brethren." Others have acted upon us, and we upon them; and this reciprocated influence enters most intimately and everywhere into that history of life which reveals its personality to the soul. We cannot but remember them; but—shall we merely remember them? Will our view of that past, so profoundly interesting to ourselves, be a dry passionless register of our relations to those whom we knew on earth? Impossible. The dead whom we have loved on earth live at this hour, not merely in our memories, but in our hearts. We do not merely remember that we once loved them; we love them now. It is not memory which keeps them alive. Love it is rather, which cannot die, and which involves the persistent life of memory. We should not know ourselves, our earthly life would be to us strange and unintelligible, if we could remember without emotion those whom we have once really loved. And therefore we should only retain a mutilated soul; our soul would have forfeited its identity, if it could have stripped itself of affection in the act of dying, while it retained the cold clear consciousness of objects, which had once reigned in the heart.

Besides memory and affection, that which we term character is a test of personality. As no two faces, so no two souls, are absolutely alike. The Creator exhibits His inexhaustible resources in moulding an unnumbered series of individuals after a general type without making any one of them the exact counterpart of another. The differences between soul and soul are greater than any



bodily differences of feature and stature. They are, it may be added, independent of the vital and trenchant distinctions which sever souls in a state of grace and reconciliation with God from the sinful, and the unreconciled. Differences in the soul's physiognomy, differences original and profound, sever race from race, sex from sex, this individual from that. Here reason predominates, feeling there ; here action, there passion ; in this quarter is decision, in that tenderness ; on this side a daring impetuosity, on that a cautious or timid reserve. We find in others the complement of what is lacking, or the corrective of what is excessive in ourselves. But meanwhile these peculiar capacities, dispositions, shades of feeling, turns of thought, which have no moral colouring, are, in their combination, part of our individual inheritance of the gift of life, and enter profoundly into our personality. Can we surrender them altogether, and be still ourselves ? Will there be nothing to distinguish St. John from St. Peter in heaven ? Certainly "in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female" (Gal. ii. 22), in that each sex is equally an object of His Divine redemption, and those who live with Him in His eternal Kingdom will, as we know, be conformed to the image of the Son of God. May it not be true that our Christian belief in the resurrection of the body is but the logical consequence, the last and highest expression, of the Christian's intense belief in, and reverence for, the indestructible personality of man ? Would that personality be entirely unmutilated, if at death the body were to perish

outright? Has not the body been for years, the companion, the home, the organ, the expression of the soul within? And does this companionship point to nothing but a higher freedom and perfection for the soul, when soul and body shall have been parted by death? The Christian faith bids us look forward to a resurrection of that very body which has been throughout our earthly life the instrument, the dwelling-house, perchance the faithful transcript of the personal soul within it. And the risen body, transfigured, translucent with spiritual glory, will still assert in the courts of heaven the deathless endurance of our personality in its unimpaired completeness.

“My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever” (Psa. lxii. 14). This in all ages is the exulting voice of the conviction, of the instinct, of the sense of immortality, in the servants of God. He upholds them in being, and His eternity is to be the measure of their own endless life. Yet they do not lose themselves in Him. He upholds their distinct personality; “God is the strength of *my* heart:” He so folds them to His Bosom that *they* possess *Him*; “God is *my* portion for ever.” Already, in a measure, heaven is within them, by anticipation. Yet their sense of an undying existence does not create, still less is it a substitute for, the reality.

The sense of immortality may be lost; the fact, whether for weal or woe, remains. The sense of immortality may be gradually or violently killed out of the soul by the errors of depraved intellect; or it may be buried

alive, beneath the filth of animal indulgence. That soul must have parted with its God which is indeed altogether enslaved to matter. It is the willing accomplice of a body whose degradations sap the springs even of physical life. It hastily shuts its eyes with sensitive apprehension against the unwelcome shadow, against the dreaded presentiment, of an actual immortality. Truly such a soul is in love with death. It is sinking lower and lower, deeper and deeper, into the moral and intellectual abyss. And as it sinks it forfeits, without a pang, the perception of its own powers, of its own reality; of the unity, and simplicity, and immateriality of its essence; of its past spiritual freedom from matter; of its possessing, of its being, an indestructible principle of life. It welcomes any philosophy which will engage to overcloud the Face of the Sun of Righteousness, or which will assist it to bury itself decently in the folds of sense, and to forget its true home and destiny while it feeds upon the husks that the swine did eat.

Can such a soul return? Can it rise? Undoubtedly. On this side of the grave there are no limits to the power of the grace of God. And as the soul rises it recovers its hold upon those glorious truths which it lost in its descent. Together with the sight of God, the sight of the true self returns. The sense of immortality is deepened by all that brings the personal soul, consciously, face to face with the personal God who made it. The sense of immortality is deepened by penitence; for penitence is the sincere exercise of memory upon our past existence,

under the guidance of the love of God. It is deepened by prayer ; for prayer is the voice of the inmost being consciously speaking to its Maker. It is reinforced by such channels of the Divine Power as are the Sacraments. The earliest Fathers spoke of the Eucharist, in allusion to the words of our Divine Lord, as "the salve of immortality." It is stimulated by acts of self-sacrifice, which kindle into intense consciousness the immortal germ of life ; though they may for a while depress, at the bidding of eternal principles, its earthly tenement. It prompts, and is strengthened by, a genuine love of man as man. Doing justice to the greatness of human destiny, it has no heart to dwell on the accidents of birth, or station, or income, or accomplishments which overlie the mighty reality, upon which alone its gaze is persistently fixed. But it attains its greatest strength, it prepares for its loftiest triumphs, at the foot of the cross of Jesus ; since the agony of the Divine Victim reveals the price and yields the measure of the life of the human soul.

Thus they who, like David, have gazed on the dying Redeemer by the light of prophecy, or who, like St. Paul, in the full sunshine of the Gospel, have determined "to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified (1 Cor. ii. 2)—have enjoyed in the highest degree the sense of immortality. What the representatives of an advanced civilization are among a herd of savages, such are the saints of God when we compare them with ordinary men. They have higher aims, larger horizons, more commanding points of view, a loftier, nay a totally

distinct conception of life and destiny. It is said that the Roman conquerors of the world carried in their faces the secret of the triumphs of an imperial people. Much more do sincere Christians walk the earth with the mien and bearing of a race of immortals ; although the rays of spiritual majesty which stream forth from the burning spirit within them often do but illumine the weakness of the body which yet encases it. Of such it is literally true, that, "whether they live they live unto the Lord, or whether they die they die unto the Lord" (Rom. xiv. 8). They know that the few years of time are but a halt at the gate of Eternity : and that true wisdom consists in practically understanding the ineffaceable distinction which parts that which perishes before our very eyes from that which must last for ever.

UNIVERSITY SERMONS, First Series, p. 115.

Our Lord's Ascension the Church's Gain

"It is expedient for you that I go away."—ST. JOHN xvi. 7.

ON this great festival our Book of Common Prayer supplies us with a service which can hardly fail to engage the whole heart and interest of the devout worshipper. Every modification of the ordinary ritual of the Church that lends importance to Christmas or Whitsunday is exhibited to-day. We have proper Psalms, proper Lessons, a special Creed, Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, and a proper Preface. If we except the opening anthem, Easter-Day itself enjoys no distinctions in our English Prayer Book which are refused to Ascension-Day. The compilers of the English Liturgy have evidently laboured to sustain the ancient dignity of this glorious festival, and to assert for the Ascension of our Lord, in the public devotions of the Church, that prominence which is given to it in the pages of Holy Scripture. Of the three inspired records of the event, the Gospel for the day gives that of St. Mark; the Epistle that of the Acts of the Apostles; the Second Lesson in the morning service that of St. Luke's Gospel. In the Morning Service the second ascent of the great Jewish Lawgiver into the

Mount of God, followed by the separation of the tribe of Levi, foreshadows the greater ascent of the Prophet of the New Covenant, issuing in the Pentecostal blessing and its abiding results. At Evensong a more exact anticipation of the Redeemer's triumph, in the assumption of Elijah, whose mantle falls upon his attendant and disciple, is followed by the most emphatic reference to the consequences of the Ascension which is to be found in the Epistles of St. Paul. The proper Psalms too, whether by their plain direct literal sense, or through the deeper mystical sense which underlies the letter, happily set forth the event of the day, together with its spiritual and historical consequences. David, when feeding his flock at night under an Eastern sky, "considers the heavens, the work of God's fingers;" he marvels that God should have been so mindful of man as to set all things in this beautiful world under his feet. But David is in reality chanting the praises of the Second Adam, as He returns to His throne, "crowned with glory and honour." After its long captivity, the sacred ark is at length being carried to the royal city, and the Psalmist King, girded in a linen ephod, is tracing the moral likeness of the man who is meet to dwell in the tabernacle and to rest in the holy hill of Jehovah. But the outline suggests an unearthly standard of perfection; the Psalmist is shadowing out the spotless purity of our Ascending Lord. Then follows a celebration of Israel's victory over the combined hosts of Ammon and Syria. But the spiritual sense of the Church forthwith detects in the "blessings of good-

ness," and in the "crown of pure gold" set on the Conqueror's head, and in the "long life, even for ever and ever," the majesty of her Lord and Saviour, Who "has overcome the sharpness of death," and to Whom "all power is given in heaven and in earth," and "Whose kingdom shall have no end." The gates of the city of the Great King are bidden by the choirs of Israel on some religious festival to welcome the sacred ark and veiled presence of the Lord of Hosts. But Christian thought mounts forthwith to the eternal gates of heaven, and to the countless host of spirits that sweep around the rising form of the true "King of Glory," and it accompanies the passage of that King, the everlasting Son of the Father, clothed with His Human Nature, into the Inaccessible Light. After the victory over Sennacherib, a Hebrew poet invites the Gentile world to see in Israel's Lord, not, as Pagans might dream, a mere national deity, but the great King over all the earth, "reigning over the heathen and sitting upon His holy seat." But *we* cannot forget that the "princes of the Gentile people" were never really "joined unto the people of the God of Abraham," until, on a greater day, and after a greater triumph, our God and Saviour had "gone up with a merry noise" and "with the sound of a trumpet" to heaven. If at a period of great national depression, two portions of earlier poems have been fused into one, as we find them at this day in Psa. cviii., the inspired combination exactly expresses on this festival the mind of the Christian Church. She "rejoices right early with

lute and harp" for her Lord "set above the heavens," and "shedding His glory over all the earth;" and she reminds Him Who had promised "to go forth with her hosts," how Moab and Edom and Philistia, the heathen world that lies close around her borders, is still unsubdued to the banner of the Cross.

We may not linger here. Yet surely we have been kindled to-day by the voices of Hebrew Psalmists, or, as in the Collect and proper Preface, by the aspirations of Christian Fathers; and this bustling world in which we live has possessed a diminished interest for us, as we have in heart and mind gone up in the track of the glorified Jesus, our Ascending Lord.

What mean we, let me ask, brethren, by this service? What has been our governing thought in offering it? Have we dwelt first and chiefly on the glory and majesty, the joy and gladness of our great Redeemer? Or have we been solely or mainly engaged with the blessings which He is winning for ourselves?

To the Apostolical Christian, the Being of God, the Natures and Person of Jesus Christ, the mysteries of His Human Life, and His seat at the Right Hand of the Majesty on high, are precious, for a higher reason than any which is merely personal. They open out to his soul the awful and serene beauty of that Existence, in the contemplation of Which he utterly forgets himself. "We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee,' not simply for Thy mercies to usward, but that Thou art what Thou art.

We give thanks to Thee 'for Thy great glory,' *propter magnam gloriam Tuam*. We thank Thee that Thou art what Thou wouldest have been if no created intelligence had known and loved Thee, and if Thou hadst lived on in the solitary majesty of Thy eternal years.—'We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.' And it is in this spirit that the true Christian first of all considers the mystery of his Lord's Ascension. "If ye loved Me," said our Lord, "ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto My Father."—"Self would be forgotten in the sight of the glory of One Whom you love."

Such is, indeed, the true Christian temper, in the presence of this, as of all the mysteries of the Gospel. The manifested glory, the vindicated honour of Jesus Christ takes rank before all other considerations. At length that Life of humiliation is over; at length that bitter cup of suffering has been drained; at length that wasted form is to become visibly "fairer than the children of men," and the Bridegroom of the Church is to "gird His sword upon His thigh, as becomes the Most Mighty, and according to His worship and renown." And so, in that last parting benediction, in that solemn measured upward movement, in that now glorious Form, shrouded from sight by a passing cloud, but still visible to Faith, as it moves onwards through trackless space, thronged by an escort of ministering spirits, the soul beholds a solemn act of reparation for the suffering Life which had preceded it, and rejoices with a joy which belongs to the highest sense of satisfied Justice. "He

emptied Himself of His glory, and took on Him the form of a slave, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross;—*wherefore* also God hath highly exalted Him.”

We cannot say that this is all. We cannot pretend fully to determine wherein lay the especial fitness of the Ascension in its relation to the Person and Majesty of Christ. Such was the glory of His Body and His Soul after the Resurrection that neither could become intrinsically more glorious. But Heaven was His true abode, when He had once risen from His tomb. He lingered on earth only in condescension to the needs of His disciples. The Ascension was the completion of that majesty to which the Incarnate Being was from the first destined in the eternal counsels. And those counsels were fulfilled when He had placed Himself at that Right Hand, where “there are pleasures for evermore.”

This, then, is our first tribute of love and duty to the mystery of to-day, and we may now turn to that other and very different point of view which is sanctioned by our Lord Himself in the text: “It is *expedient for you* that I go away.”

No words that ever fell from the blessed lips of Christ can have at first seemed to those faithful souls who heard them to verge more closely than these on the confines of paradox. For let it be remembered that

our Lord was speaking on the night before His passion. He had now taught His followers the emptiness of all earthly aims. He had taught them to look to Himself alone for light and guidance, and help and strength. He had weaned their affections from business, from home, from relatives, from earthly cares ; He had entwined those loving hearts closely, jealously around Himself. They did not indeed, even yet, fully know Him. But they clung to Him, all the more perseveringly it may be, as clinging in the dark to One Who at least as yet had never failed them. To Him alone could they go ; He certainly had the words of eternal life. How then can He assure them, " It is expedient for you that I go away " ? Could it be expedient for men who are still pilgrims upon earth that their Guide should be taken from them ? Could it be expedient for pupils who are still ignorant of so much necessary truth, that their great Teacher should desert them ? Could it be expedient for spiritual children, still so deficient in the practical realization of the Christian character, that they should be deprived of His visible Presence, Who taught by example even more persuasively than He taught by precept ?

He Himself says, " It is expedient. " He might have said " expedient " for the blessed spirits of the just made perfect, to whom, after overcoming the sharpness of death, He was about to open the kingdom of Heaven. He might have said " expedient " for the blessed Angels *who had* for thirty-three years been " ascending and

descending upon the Son of Man," and who had now higher ministries in store for them. He might have said " 'expedient' for Myself, Who after finishing the work that was given Me to do, am to be glorified by the Father with that glory which I had with Him before the world was." But He *does say*, "for you." "My sorrowing, broken-hearted, despairing disciples, it is 'expedient for you,' that I, your Teacher, and Friend, and Guide, and Strength, should leave you in your weakness, in your wanderings, in your loneliness, in your ignorance. You have hitherto believed Me; trust Me now when I tell you, 'It is expedient *for you* that I go away.'"

Wherein then, it may be asked, did this expediency lie? Why was it for the advantage of those whom our Lord had chosen out of the world, and whom He sent back into it as sheep in the midst of wolves, that He should leave them? How were they to be gainers by the departure of their Lord and Master, when they had hitherto been indebted to His visible Presence, to His Voice, to His Companionship, for every spiritual blessing that they enjoyed? Why was it better for the Apostles and for us that the Incarnation of the Blessed Son of God should not be visibly perpetuated into Christian history? What, then, is this transcendent gift, more precious, as it seems, than the hearing and seeing with the eyes and looking upon and handling the very Word of Life? What is this gift, so great that it can more than compensate for the loss of that intimate companionship with our Lord and Saviour which was enjoyed

by His first followers? We cannot look this question too steadily in the face : for on the answer to it depends nothing less than our estimate of the true character of the Christian Dispensation. . . . Had Christ our Lord continued to live visibly upon the earth, the spiritual force of the Church might have been expended in an indefinitely prolonged observation. It was natural that He, the Light of the world, should rivet the gaze of those who beheld Him, too completely to allow time and leisure for analysis, and comparison, and inference. The strength even of saintly souls might have been fatally overtaxed, if a moral miracle such as the Life of Jesus Christ had been perpetuated here below. If Jesus is to be seen by His creatures in His relative and awful greatness, He must be withdrawn. Even on the night before the Passion, St. Philip asks a question, which proves that he does not yet know Who Jesus really is. On the road to Emmaus the eyes of the two disciples are holden that they should not know Him ; and yet when He vanishes from their sight, they cannot but remember how their hearts had burned within them, as He talked to them by the way ! “What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter,” was an announcement from His own Lips of the self-same principle. He was to be comprehended, when He was gone. Of how many mysteries of His life is it true that “these things understood not His disciples at the first ; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that

they had done these things unto Him." The Life of Christ on earth, which manifested the Essential Nature of the Father, had first to be brought to a close, ere it could be dropped, as a seed that would spring up and bear fruit, into the heart of redeemed humanity. In the Gospels, after all, we possess only a fragment of the witnessed deeds, and of the uttered and remembered Words of Christ. If all had been recorded, the world itself, we are told, could not have contained the books that should be written. But those recorded Words and Acts of Christ have engaged the reflective powers of Christendom ever since. They are a mine which may still be worked without risk of exhaustion. They have been drawn out into literatures. They are the basis of institutions. They are the spirit of codes of law. They may have mingled with some earthly alloy, but they are to this day quick with heavenly virtue. And each representative teacher that has unfolded, and each authoritative assembly that has enforced their true essential meaning, has in adding, not to the stock of revealed truths, but to the illuminated thought of Christendom that surrounds them, attested the truth of our Master's Words,—“It is expedient for you that I go away.”

But further, startling as it may seem, it is nevertheless certain, that the life of the separate souls of the Apostles must have been quickened by the departure of their Lord. Faith, hope, and charity are the threefold cord that links the living spirit with its God. These graces

were dwarfed or merely nascent in the Apostles before the Ascension of our Saviour. The belief of the Apostles did not as yet materially differ from the creed of the devout Jew. Their hopes were centered on the right hand and on the left of an earthly throne. Their charity, if it twined itself round their Lord at times with even passionate fervour, was yet discoloured by the presence of a subtle element of sense, which dimmed its spiritual lustre. Christ left them, leading captivity captive ; telling them, that He would come again to receive them unto Himself ; telling them that He had gone to prepare a place for them ; telling them, that it was His desire that where He is there should His servants be. Like the deserted Elisha, they reach forward after Him as He passes away. They stretch forth their hands to Him ; their soul crieth unto Him as a thirsty land. And, behold, they find springing up within themselves a new and vigorous life. By leaving them, our Lord has made room for the full play and power of faith ; faith now apprehends His manhood as well as His Godhead. Faith, which only begins where sight ends, requires that its Great Object should leave the sphere of sense, ere it can perfectly lay hold on Him. Thus to Christians Faith is a second sight, which reveals Jesus crowned in Heaven with glory and honour, and throned within the veil where His very presence is an intercession. To faith He is no mere bright record of the past, although it were traced on the most sacred page of history. Still less is He an ideal of humanity that never was realized

before the eye of sense. For faith holds daily communion with Him, as with a Person, as with a vast all-comprehending Intellect, as with a resistless Will, as with a living Heart of surpassing tenderness. "Whom not having seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Hope, too, rivals in its growth, the growth of faith. It dwells no longer on any restoration of an earthly kingdom to Israel. It reaches forth into an eternal future. It follows in the track of Jesus; it gazes only in that one direction; it addresses itself to supernatural objects. The Apostles henceforth look forward to the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the times of refreshing, and to the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge should give them, and to the seeing Him as He is. The mansions of the Father's House, the eternal fellowship of the Saints, the endless vision of God,—these were the ambitions of their later life. These were the fastenings of their hope, which, sure and steadfast, like an anchor, was lodged within that veil whither their Forerunner was for them entered. And that earthly love of Him which attached itself to His earthly relations towards them, to the precise outward circumstances which surrounded His manifestation in the flesh, how has it been purified by His departure! According to St. Augustine, this carnal knowledge of Christ our Lord was the subjective cause which delayed the descent of the Holy Ghost until after the Ascension. To know Christ after the flesh was

incompatible with the higher knowledge of the life of faith; and therefore it was expedient that He should go away. For when the treasure of Christians had gone to heaven, the Christian heart would follow. When Christ was seated at the right hand of God, love, as a matter of course, would seek simply and constantly those things that are above, and not the things upon the earth. And thus, historically speaking, it is true, not merely of the Passion, but of the Ascension of our Saviour, that when lifted up from the earth, He drew men unto Him. He drew their intellects, their wills, their affections, their imaginations, their aims, and hopes, and anticipations, and sympathies up from this earthly scene towards Himself. He actually quickened and enlarged their capacities for work and for suffering here on earth, by transferring their deepest interests, along with His own glorious Person, to the courts of heaven.

But, if the Apostles had been altogether left to their own resources by their ascending Lord, could they have formed so true, so wonderful an estimate of the bearings and proportions of His Life, as by their writings to rule the thought and kindle the enthusiasm of all the ages of Christendom? Were the faith, the hope, the love, which gave to their lives the beauty and the force of heroism, thrown out, as plants of native growth, from the rich soil of their natural hearts? Are the Epistles of St. Paul, or is the character of St. John, to be explained by any searching analysis of their natural gifts, of their educational antecedents, of their external contact with

the manifested Redeemer, of the successive circumstances and directions of their lives? Surely not. Even though the Pentecostal miracle had not been recorded, some supernatural interference *must* have been assumed, in order seriously to account for the moral transformation of the Apostolical character, and for the intellectual range of the Apostolical writings. Of *itself* the departure of our risen Lord would neither have permanently illuminated the reflections of the Church, nor yet have quickened the graces of its separate members. But He left this earth in His bodily form, to return as a Quickening Spirit, present in force and virtue, before He comes to be present in judgment. He ascended up on high to obtain gifts for men; and having received of the Father, as the bounteous first-fruits of His opening and omnipotent intercession, the promise of the Holy Ghost, He shed upon the earth those wondrous gifts which the first Christians saw and heard. With the Apostles we must wait until Pentecost, if we would enter into the full expediency of the Ascension.

And yet, in that great discourse, one sentence of which is under consideration, and which was not given in writing to the Christian world upon the authority of St. John until a lapse of nearly three-quarters of a century had realized in experience its every promise, we read beforehand, and in the Words of Jesus, why it was expedient that He should go away. It was not merely that He might prepare a place for His disciples, and then come again and receive them unto Himself. It

was because, as He says, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." The whole action of the Spirit upon the intellect, and affections, and inmost character of the Christian, as well as His felt Presence and power in forming, enlightening, guiding, governing, and sanctifying the Church, must have become a lengthened justification of their Master's Ascension, in the eyes of the Apostles. If the Apostles are to be guided into all truth, if they are to be shown things to come, if they are to be taught all things, and if all the blessed words of Christ, whatsoever He said to them, are to be brought home with literal accuracy to their remembrance, it is expedient that their Lord should go. If they are to do greater works than the works of Christ, it is "because I go to My Father." If dauntless missionaries of the Cross are to bear witness of their Lord to a sinful and perishing world, it can only be because the Comforter, sent from the Father by the ascended Saviour, witnesses through their weakness to the strength and glory of their Lord. If the world is to be convinced of the sin of its own unbelief, or of the righteousness of the all-holy Redeemer, such conviction is to be a consequence of Christ's going to the Father and being seen no more. Pass the eye over that last great discourse, and mark how it bears with repeated effort and significance upon the statement of the text, that the Ascension was expedient for the apostles, expedient for the Christian Church. . . .

Before the Pentecostal Shower descended on the

Church there were drops which heralded Its approach. What else were those burning hearts of the two disciples on the Emmaus road, and that opening of their understanding to the true sense of the prophetic Scriptures? What else that solemn bestowal of the apostolical commission, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," even though He was then given as the warrant and author of a ministerial faculty rather than as the inward Guest of souls? What else that "great joy" with which, as on this day, the bereaved eleven returned to Jerusalem? Still, for ten days—wary and anxious days they must have been, though passed in retreat, in prayer, in intercession,—the expected Blessing in its fulness was withheld. For ten days the Apostles were denied the crowning proof of the expediency of their Lord's departure. Our faith has never been submitted to the ordeal of so agonizing a suspense. We live in that Holy Home upon which, shadowed out by the tongues of fire and the wind, the Spirit descended more than eighteen hundred years ago. The Lord is our Shepherd; He feeds us in the green pastures of the Church; He still "watereth her furrows, and sendeth rain into the little valleys thereof, and maketh them fat with the drops of rain, and blesseth the increase of it."

Do we appreciate our real place in the universe of God? Do we understand what it is, not to have found the soul's true home at the cost of the toil and pain of years, but as infants to have been brought to "Mount Sion, the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jeru-

salem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and Church of the first-born," and to that cleansing "Blood" with Which everything around us is sprinkled? Are our eyes opened, so that we can see the chariots of fire and horses of fire round about the Mountain? Is the horizon of our spiritual vision not really so bounded by sense and time, as to disqualify us for entering into the reasons for that high and blessed expediency of which our Lord speaks to His sorrowing followers?

Believe it, dear brethren, while Christ our Lord tarried here in the flesh, His Apostles who saw and conversed with Him, who walked by His side, who rested at His feet, who lay in His breast, were further, immeasurably further from Him than we may be, if we will. To them He was still an external example, an external voice, an external force. Christ *in us* is the hope of glory. Our ascended Lord has sent down upon us that promised and gracious Friend, Whose office it is to unite us to Himself. Therefore, by faith and love directed upon the known channels of His Presence, man may renounce in a sense his own sinful individuality, and be clothed with the Sanctity and Perfection of his Saviour. Therefore, united to Christ, man is no longer what he was in the state of nature, an isolated unit; he is a member of that spiritual organization which is Christ's Body, and His life has already commingled with that higher life which flows from the Head and Heart of the redeemed Church. Therefore the Saviour lives in His Church; He lives in

us: therefore Sacraments have grace and virtue, and prayer is co-operation with the Perpetual Intercession of our Lord. He intercedes, and we pray. He claims the Divine compassion, and we recommend each other to the Mercy of the great Creator. He offers Himself as the one Sacrifice for sins, and lo! we desire God's "fatherly goodness mercifully to accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, most humbly beseeching Him to grant that we and all His whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of our Saviour's passion." If we feel the expediency of the Ascension, we are men of prayer. "In heart and mind" we "ascend thither" where prayer is not effort but an atmosphere. We know by blessed experience that prayer in the Church of God is not the voice of slaves who cringe in terror before a tyrant-lord; that it is not the petition of mercenaries, of whose service the highest aim is to add to what they have. Rather is it the instinctive breathing of an informing Spirit, the voice of children who without doubt or questioning throw themselves into their Father's arms, since they are conformed to the image of His blessed Son Jesus Christ the Righteous. For indeed prayer is the life-blood of the Church. We Christians pray because, if we live spiritually, we cannot but pray. We are carried forward by an unseen force which fills the Holy House where we are sitting. And this torrent of prayer, this pleading of all for each and of each for all, this mutual service perpetually sought and as perpetually rendered; this onward upward movement of souls, at once in supplication and

in thanksgiving presenting themselves as brethren of Christ our Saviour before the Throne of our Father and our God: this continuous spiritual activity is the fresh warm blood that circulates through the arteries of the Church; it is both its deepest life and the expression of that life, it is the voice of its adoring love; it is the ceaseless sigh of the everlasting Spirit within it.

Can we realize, each one for himself, what is involved in this expediency of our Lord's Ascension? Not if we imagine that we can appropriate His Divine teaching by the mere exertion of our natural faculties, and that we owe little or nothing to His solemn voice as it speaks to each one of us in the recesses of conscience, and as it echoes along the records of the Undivided Church. Not if we propose to ourselves deliberately and upon theory a moral standard which is lower and less than that of the Great Teacher. Not if we forget the sharp distinction which exists, and which will exist for ever, between the very highest, noblest, purest, truest efforts of nature, and the heavenly action of the Spirit of Grace. Not if we are giving up the evangelical graces of faith, and hope, and charity, and joy, and peace, and longsuffering; while we are falling back upon what are merely the highest products of the unsanctified heart, manliness, and temperance, and common sense, and justice, and perseverance, and amiability, and integrity. Not if we thus content ourselves with virtues which paganism might have taught us, although the Son of God had never become Incarnate and had never suffered on the Cross. We

shall never understand the expediency of the Ascension, if we forget we are the subjects of a Spiritual Dispensation, in which forces more extraordinary are at work, and results more wonderful are produced, than any which fall under the cognizance of sense. For us, this blessed day will have no real meaning if, now that our Lord is so very near us, we neglect to claim and to deepen our communion with Him in common prayer and in frequent Sacraments; if we are altogether unlike that holy company, which, when their Lord had gone from their sight, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. . . .

The Ascension reminds us of a Life which is higher than this world, and than that which belongs to it. So much higher, so much more blessed and glorious is the life of grace, that One Who loved us men with the truest and purest affection, yet withdrew Himself, as on this day, from our sight, in order to enable us, if we will, to live it.

Brethren, let us lift up our hearts, let us lift them up unto our ascended Lord. Let us put from us the whisper of those who only live in and for what they see, and who tell us that the Divine life which strikes higher and deeper than the life of sense is visionary, unpractical, superstitious. A life "hidden with Christ" is blessed beyond all words in the manifold proofs of its intrinsic power and of the tender enduring compassion of our Saviour. Let us mark and seek the generation of them that seek Him; let us, if we would be lightened, have an eye unto Him Who is the True Light. He ever lives, now

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as on the morrow of His triumph ; He lives in the city of the saints, the Lamb Throned and Omnipotent. Let us "in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell." Let us continually, while we tarry here, pierce the veil by prayer, and behold His Presence in righteousness, that hereafter we may wake up after His likeness, and be satisfied with it.

UNIVERSITY SERMONS, First Series, p. 283, etc.

St. Paul's Prayer to Jesus

"And I said, What shall I do, Lord?"—ACTS xxii. 10.

HE to whom, at the crisis of a far greater destiny, Ananias brought consolation and relief from Jesus, was himself conspicuous for his devotion to the adorable Person of our Lord. Even at the very moment of his conversion, Saul of Tarsus sought guidance from Jesus Christ in prayer, as from the lawful Lord of his being. "Lord," he cried, "what shall I do?" And when afterwards in the temple our Lord bade St. Paul "Make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem," we find the Apostle, like Ananias, unfolding to Jesus his secret thoughts, his fears, his regrets, his confessions; laying them out before Him, and waiting for an answer from Jesus in the secret chambers of his soul. Indeed, St. Paul constantly uses language which shows that he habitually thought of Jesus as of Divine Providence in a Human Form, watching over, befriending, consoling, guiding, providing for him and his, with Infinite foresight and power, but also with the tenderness of a human sympathy. In this sense Jesus is placed on a level with the Father in St. Paul's two earliest Epistles. "Now God

Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you." "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, Which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." Thus Jesus is associated with the Father, in one instance as directing the outward movements of the Apostle's life, in another as building up the inward life of the recent converts to Christianity. In other devotional expressions the name of Jesus stands alone. "I trust in the Lord Jesus," so the apostle writes to the Philippians, "to send Timotheus shortly unto you." "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord," so he assures St. Timothy, "Who has given me power, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." Is not this the natural language of a soul which is constantly engaged in communion with Jesus, whether it be the communion of praise or the communion of prayer? Jesus is to St. Paul, not a deceased teacher or philanthropist, who has simply done his great work and then has left it as a legacy to the world; He is God, ever living and ever present, the Giver of temporal and of spiritual blessings, the Guide and Friend of man, both in man's outward and in his inward life. If we had no explicit records of prayers offered by St. Paul to Jesus, we might be sure that such prayers were offered, since otherwise the language which he employs could not have been used. But, in point of fact, the apostle has not left us in doubt as to his faith or his practice in this

respect. "If," he asserts, "thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek ; for the Same is Lord over all, rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." The prophet Joel had used these last words of prayer to the Lord Jehovah. St. Paul, as the whole context shows beyond reasonable doubt, understands them of prayer to Jesus. And what are the apostle's benedictions in the name of Christ but indirect prayers offered to Christ that His blessing might be vouchsafed to the Churches which the Apostle is addressing? "Grace be to you from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." Or what shall we say of St. Paul's entreaties that he might be freed from the mysterious and humiliating infirmity which he terms his "thorn in the flesh"? He tells us that three times he besought the Lord Jesus Christ that it might depart from him, and that in mercy his prayer was refused. Are we to imagine that that prayer to Jesus was an isolated act in St. Paul's spiritual life? Does any such religious act stand alone in the spiritual history of an earnest and moderately consistent man? Apostles believed that when the First-begotten was brought into the inhabited world,

the angels of heaven were bidden to worship Him. They declared Him, when His day of humiliation and suffering had ended, to have been so highly exalted, that the Name which He had borne on earth, and which is the symbol of His Humanity, was now the very atmosphere and nutriment of all the upward torrents of prayer which rise from the moral world beneath His throne: that as the God-Man He was worshipped by angels, by men, and by the spirits of the dead. The practice of the apostles did but illustrate their faith, and the prayers offered to Jesus by His servants on earth were believed to be but a reflection of that worship which is offered to Him by the Church of heaven.

If this belief is less clearly traceable in the brief Epistles of St. Peter, it is especially observable in St. John. St. John is speaking of the Son of God, when he exclaims, "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, . . . we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." These petitions of the earthly Church correspond to the adoration above, where the wounded Humanity of our Lord is throned in the highest heavens. "I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as It had been slain." Around Him are three concentric circles of adoration. The inmost proceeds from the four mysterious creatures and the four and twenty elders who "have harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints." These are the courtiers

who are placed on the very steps of the throne ; they represent more distant worshippers. But they, too, fall down before the throne, and sing the new song which is addressed to the Lamb slain and glorified : "Thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by Thy Blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." Around these, at a greater distance from the Most Holy, there is a countless company of worshippers : "I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the creatures, and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.'" Beyond these again, the entranced Apostle discerns a third sphere in which a perpetual worship is maintained. Lying outside the two inner circles of conscious adoration offered by the heavenly intelligences, there is in St. John's vision an assemblage of all created life, which, whether it wills or not, lives for Christ's as for the Father's glory : "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." This is the hymn of the whole visible creation, and to it a response comes from the

inmost circle of adoring beings, ratifying and harmonizing this sublime movement of universal life : " And the four creatures said, Amen." And how does the redeemed Church on earth bear her part in this universal chorus of praise? " Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His Own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

It is surely impossible to mistake the force and meaning of this representation of the adoration of the Lamb in the Apocalypse. This representation cannot be compared with the Apocalyptic pictures of the future fortunes of the Church, where the imagery employed frequently leaves room for allusions so diverse, that no interpretation can be positively assigned to a particular symbol without a certain intellectual and spiritual immodesty in the interpreter who essays to do so. You may in vain endeavour satisfactorily to solve the questions which encompass such points as the number of the beast or the era of the millennium ; but you cannot doubt for one moment Who is meant by " the Lamb," or what is the character of the worship that is so solemnly offered to Him.

THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD, p. 378.

The Honour of Humanity

“*Honour all men.*”—I PETER ii. 17.

WHAT is honour? It is, first of all, a sentiment which prompts us to acknowledge, and to do homage to, some form of truth. Like all other healthy moral movements, it must itself be based on truth; it must result from conviction. It must spring from a sense of merit of some kind in the object which provokes it; and, therefore, it must begin from within. The outward insignia of honour are a cruel mockery of their object when they do not express and illustrate a living feeling that the respect which they represent is due. Honour, then, in the first place, is a genuine movement of the soul; but secondly, it is often a substantial expression of that movement in the outward visible world of sense. Whether it be embodied in a gesture, or in a title, or in a gift of money, it is at bottom an acknowledgment of superior worth, attaching, it may be, to an individual, or to an office, or to an institution. St. Paul tells Timothy that the presbyters who preside over Churches well, especially those who labour in the word and doctrine, are to be counted worthy of double honour; and there can be little doubt that he really means a double income.

This income, as the word implies, is to be paid, not as a commercial equivalent for services rendered, but as an acknowledgment of ministerial worth. It is a practical expression of the sentiment of honour, quickened into activity by a worthy object.

When, then, St. Peter says that we are to "honour all men," he means, no doubt, that if opportunity arises we are to give practical expression to the disposition to honour them. But he means, first of all, that this disposition should itself exist. And it is here that we reach the point at which the need is felt of basing the precept upon a conviction. Why should we thus be disposed to "honour all men"? That question must be answered, if at all satisfactorily, by the doctrines of the Church of Christ. For it is obvious, my brethren, that this disposition to yield honour to the whole company of our fellow-creatures, is not natural to man, being such as he is. Our first instinct is not to honour, but to depreciate our brother-men. This tendency is part of that self-assertion which, in sinners, is a leading result of the fall, and which is impatient of rivalry, even where there is no reason to fear opposition. The gentle depreciation of others is a more welcome form of self-assertion to a refined society, than is the boisterous and coarse glorification of self. And, therefore, as this age depreciates the last, and this country foreign countries, and this University other Universities, and this or that college other colleges, so this individual—you or I, left to our natural instincts—depreciates other men; not men in-

discriminately, but those particular classes of men who come naturally into some sort of competition with ourselves. Even in quarters where what we term advanced Liberal opinions are professed on social, political, educational, and theological questions, it is sometimes possible to discover the least generous and most depreciatory judgments of the worth and motives of others. And what is yet more humbling is that, where the law of Christ is acknowledged as a binding and imperial power, the old instinct continually reasserts itself, and Christians refuse to men in general, nay, to their brethren in Christ, that tribute of honour which is due in some sense to every human being.

It is clear that if man is left to himself, he is by no means disposed to "honour all men." Why is he bound to make head against this natural inclination?

Is it in deference to a sense of self-interest—to a belief that courtesy is a cheap thing, which if it does not make friends, yet keeps clear of making enemies? No! For this superficial courtesy is not honour. As it is thrown down upon the great counter of human life and intercourse, its hollow ring betrays its worthlessness, and men only do not take umbrage at such coin being tendered because it forms so large a proportion of the social currency that it cannot be dispensed with. The honour which the apostle prescribes is not an insincere conventionalism, but a true expression of inward respect. . . .

What, then, are the motives which should lead a Christian to honour all men?

The first is, that all men are made in the image of God. "God created man in His own image, after His likeness." This image and likeness consists in the fact that, first of all, man is an intelligent being, conscious of, and able steadily to reflect upon, his own existence; and, next, that his will is free. In each of these respects he is unlike any one of the lower creatures; in each he is like God. The lower creatures have a measure of intelligence; but they cannot make themselves the object of such intelligence as they possess. They take their existence for granted; they cannot turn their thought back upon itself; they cannot reflect; their thought is ever directed upon objects without them. Much more are they incapable of arriving at anything like a theory of their own existence. And their wills, if the term may be used, drift before instinct and circumstance so entirely as to be incapable of real moral choice. God, on the other hand, is the One Being Who ever contemplates Himself, and sustains the contemplation; Who ever acts in conformity of course with the eternal laws of His own Being, yet thus with an unfettered freedom. Man's true position is that of a reflection among the creatures of the self-contemplating and self-determining life of God. While by his lower nature man is linked to the animals around him, his higher nature associates him with all the orders of the immaterial beings above him, and it constitutes his likeness to God by its double endowment of intelligence and freedom.

Man as man is intelligent and free. He is not merely an animal organism endowed with life; he is a spirit capable of comprehending the significance of its own existence, capable of knowing the Author of its being, capable of freely deciding to obey or to defy Him.

This is the first great reason for honouring all men. All men are endued with an immortal, conscious, self-determining principle of life. Or rather that principle is each man's true self, around which all else that belongs to him is clustered, and to which it stands in the relation of a property, or it may be of an accident.

What need is there to say, brethren, that, to the mass of men, this elementary truth is practically unknown? They know much of society around them, much of its rules and laws and tendencies; much, it may be, of the outward universe; much of the various subjects which concern and diversify man's material well-being on the surface of this planet. But they carry within themselves that which is more wonderful than anything which meets their eye; and of it they know nothing. They think indeed, and resolve; but it is, as if they were imitating the lower creatures, without reflection, and in the way of instinct and routine; they do not consider what is really involved in these vast powers of thought and resolution. That the inward life from which their whole mental and moral action proceeds is made in God's image, and is destined as such to a futurity beyond the grave, is a truth which, generally and practically, is shrouded from them by mists of intellectual blindness

and moral weakness. And what they do not see in themselves, they do not see in others. Other men are, in their eyes, not immortal spirits, moving round them robed in a drapery of flesh and blood ; but mere forces or counters with which they have to deal, and of which they think habitually only so far as such forces may bear on their own daily life of thought and feeling and purpose.

Now it was one great object and result of the ministry of our Lord, that it revealed to man his true dignity. Jesus Christ always dealt with men as being what they are. He did not fix His eye upon dress, or income, or position, or bodily mien and form ; His glance pierced straight through to the personality, the character, the spirit within. To Him, Pilate, Herod, Nicodemus, the rich young man, the woman of Samaria, the Magdalen, were not merely high office, royalty, learning, wealth, degradation, social disfranchisement. They were these in the eyes of common men, but before Jesus Christ they were each and all immortal spirits, in varying states of spiritual life or disease ; and the outward distinctions, which made them what they were in the social world of Palestine, were before Him as if they did not exist, except so far as such distinctions might enhance or detract from personal responsibility. This is the meaning of our Lord's constant violation of worldly standards of social propriety : He sacrifices them to the higher demands of man's real dignity. He attends the feast given by the converted publican to his friends and

acquaintances ; He permits the woman that is a sinner to wash His feet ; He lingers in conversation with her of Samaria, whose career of vice was so well known to Him ; He will not tarry to see His mother and His brethren, since He finds near relatives in all that do the will of God ; He calls Herod a fox ; He weeps over Jerusalem. Pharisees condemn Him in language of grave surprise ; disciples are baffled and cannot understand Him.

But He goes on His way, revealing man's true self to man ; proclaiming that it matters little if the whole world be gained and the true life be lost ; proclaiming that if the inwardly-apprehended kingdom of Righteousness be really sought, all the outward accidents of man's passing existence will, in the highest sense, be added to it. And therefore it is that, since the days of Jesus Christ, Christians, so far as they have been Christians indeed, have honoured in all men, that possession of the image of God which is man's real inalienable self. For Christ had taught them its significance and beauty by His precepts ; and yet He had done more than this ; He had taught them its inestimable worth by His bitter death.

Our Lord's Death upon the Cross is a second reason for honouring all men. His death was indeed a true sacrifice offered to the Justice and Majesty of God ; but it was also an act of homage and honour to the worth of the human spirit. Certainly, in order to understand this, we must believe in very truth that He who suffered

on Calvary is truly God. If He were a mere man, then so far would His death be from having any atoning virtue that it may be fairly questioned, nay, it has been questioned, whether such a death was not morally indefensible, as being in fact an act of voluntary self-destruction, since He might have avoided the encounter with Jewish opinion which more immediately precipitated the action of the Sanhedrim. But being, as He is, Very and Eternal God, He imparted to His passive as to His active obedience a priceless value; and He wrought out, in intention, the salvation of the whole race of men, when He hung dying upon the Tree of Shame. He did not die only for the elect; He died for all. And yet His world-embracing intention neither put force upon the wills of men, nor was independent of their willingness to be saved by Him. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves." "There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the Propitiation for our sins."

And therefore it is that at the foot of the Cross we learn the honour which is due to all men. It was to enlighten the conscience of man; it was to purify man's soul from the stains, and to free it from the burden of sin; it was to restore man to his true and native dignity among the first-born of Creation that our Saviour died. His anguish of spirit, His night of insults and of shame, His weary

bearing of the instrument of His death, the spitting, the buffeting, the Crown of Thorns, the wounds, the words, each and all, which He uttered upon the Cross, are one long testimony to the truth enforced by His Apostle ; that man, under all circumstances, man in his utmost degradation, man as man, is to be honoured among Christians by a homage which will even express itself in the sacrifice of the holiest of lives.

It is not a little remarkable, that this very Epistle, which bids us "honour all men," is one of the five Apostolic Epistles containing directions to slaves respecting their duties to their masters. At first sight, there seems an intrinsic incompatibility between the precept, and such an indirect sanction of an institution which was its standing violation. But this incompatibility is rather apparent than real. If the Apostles did not provoke the horrors of a social revolution by at once proscribing slavery ; if they left it to die—a lingering death, it is true—at the hands of the generations to come, penetrated by a sense of its violation of the law of Christ, and of the rights of man ;—this was because they felt themselves in possession of a principle so strong that it would purge slavery of its worst evils, before destroying it. That principle was the dignity of man, created in God's image, and redeemed by Christ. Conscious of this dignity, the slave could rejoice to copy the humiliations of the Divine Master Who had really ennobled him. Conscious of this dignity, the master could but respect his slave, as a brother in Christ, side by side with whom he too was

himself waiting for judgment. In the presence of these sublime realities, the outward inequalities of life fade away from the soul's sight; the eye is fixed only upon that which does not change. A few years of service or of command are equally unimportant to a being who has Eternity clearly before him, and who measures human greatness by the standards which it supplies.

The practical bearings of this suggestive precept are so numerous that it will be necessary to confine ourselves to the following, by way of conclusion.

"Honour all men," is a fitting motto for the spirit of much of our study in this place. Whatever may have been of late years, whatever may be in years to come, the modifications introduced into our educational course, it cannot be doubted that to the school of *Literæ Humaniores* there must always be assigned a place of special importance. How full of meaning is the title of that school! It carries us back to the close of the Middle Ages. It expresses the rising reaction against that scholastic method which had penetrated into and stiffened all departments of human thought. It represents a craving for, or a new admiration of, a literature more human in its interests than were the dialectics, in which the substance of thought and feeling had seemed to evaporate in the culture of intellectual form. It embodies the conviction that in the works of the historians, the orators, and the poets of antiquity, the minds and hearts of men were laid bare with a breadth and fulness which must ever make them worthy objects of the closest

human study. If there is much in these writers with which no Christian can sympathize, much which degrades and brutalizes human nature, yet St. Basil had pointed out that they afforded that special preparation for the study of the faith which is needed by those who would effectively show how it meets the sympathies and wants of man. If, from the thirteenth century onwards, in consequence of an educational movement of like nature to that which took place in Imperial Rome during the second century, the "humanities" had fallen into discredit; yet in earlier ages, throughout those great schools of the Benedictine Order with which are associated the names of St. Boniface, and Alcuin, and Rhabanus Maurus, and Venerable Bede, they had been cultivated with the utmost enthusiasm. It may be a natural wish in those who are looking forward to serving God in Holy Orders to desire to abandon the study of Pagan writers, and to live in an intellectual atmosphere, fed by the words of Holy Scripture, and by the great teachers of the Ancient Church. But, in truth, like the Jewish law, the Greek and Latin classics are a pedagogue whose especial duty it is to lead us down to the school of Christ. They show us the human soul in the freshness and beauty and strength of nature, yet also in the weakness and degradation which must mark the absence of grace. If there is much in them to regret, there is much more to admire; if none of them, not even the purest of the Stoic moralists, can approve himself absolutely to a Christian judgment, yet they all, in different degrees,

are marked by that beauty and meaning which belong to everything truly human, and which we honour in our tribute of honour to man.

“Honour all men.” Here is the Christian rule for social intercourse. Honour high station; honour authority; honour genius; honour courage; honour even success, if you will; but do not limit your honour to these things. If you honour the representative men of humanity, those who embody and intensify its great qualities or interests, do not forget that that which you honour in them is shared in a measure by all.

If, indeed, our intercourse with each other were constantly penetrated by the recollection of what we really are, and of the respect which is due to the sanctities of the soul's life, how different would it be! Not necessarily less bright and genial; but certainly more earnest, more thorough, more full of meaning. As it is, we too often retain the forms of Christian courtesy, while we have lost the sense of their power. How altered, too, would be our bearing towards servants and social inferiors, who in fact superadd, in addition to other titles to honour, that of correspondence, in the circumstances of their outward life, to the condition of Our Lord Himself. If only we could see in all with whom we deal, beings who, like ourselves, are for a brief while on their trial, and who share with us the awfulness and the blessedness of existence, how vivid and keen, how tender withal, how full of attention and respect would be, not merely our outward manner, but *our inmost feelings* towards them!

Nor can I refrain from saying that, in the days which are opening upon us in England, we shall find this social spirit, eminently Christian and ever obligatory as it is, nothing less than a political necessity. If in the new distribution of power among our countrymen in years to come, we are to escape from collisions of class with class, leading on, it may be, even to revolutionary violence, it must be, under God, by an earnest effort on the part of those who represent the higher orders of society to cultivate and to practice a deeper, more earnest respect for human beings as such. It is upon your determination in this matter, my brethren, more than upon that of the representatives of any other class in this country, that our future depends. In the absence of this spirit, an old society like that of England, based on feudal and Tudor traditions, must obviously have very much to fear: with its increase, we have assuredly everything to hope.

Lastly, in this precept we may discover the true spirit of Christian works of mercy. All the plans which Christian charity really devises and sets on foot are based on the principle of respect for man. Christian charity refuses to deal with human beings like counters and in masses: she leaves it to other agencies to sweep the refuse poverty of society into its workhouses, and its refuse labour into the hold of an emigrant ship, while note is taken of each unit only so far as is needful in order to secure the accuracy of the official return, and to supply his data to the statistician. Christian charity

relieves poverty, not as conferring a favour, but as satisfying what is in some sense a right ;—the right of humanity to live, and to ask in God's name at the hands of property the means of livelihood. Christian charity refuses to acquiesce in the inhuman dogma that men or races are incurably bad or degraded : she treats the lowest as still bearing, within, the stamp of the Divine likeness, as still capable, through supernatural grace, of the highest elevation. She bends respectfully to tend the foulest wounds, she kneels upon the pavement side by side with the Eternal Christ, that she may wash the feet which have been soiled in traversing the wastes of time : she bows herself to the very earth that she may “take the sinner out of the dust and lift the beggar from the dunghill” and then “set him with the princes, even with the princes of the people” of Christ. Especially, in the little ones who fill her schools, she respects and tends the image of God, and that sprinkling of the Holy Blood, which has not yet been forfeited. But whether she instructs the young, or feeds the hungry, or clothes the naked, or provides labour for the unemployed, or offers shelter to the homeless, or an asylum to the deranged, or a refuge where the fallen may find aids to rise, or a bed where the sick may die in peace, tended by the hand of love,—everywhere she stands before humanity, not as a patroness, but as might a loving and faithful servant, who is too loyal, too enamoured of her master's name and birthright, to be other than affectionate and respectful in the hour of his *poverty* and shame.

Associate yourselves then, dear brethren, with this sublime charity of the Church. Endeavour during this season of discipline and repentance to give a practical turn to the honour which you owe to all men. Honour, indeed, those for whom you can do nothing in the way of outward service : honour your betters in Church and State, your superiors in acquirements or in station : but honour also the poor, the fallen, the sick, the ignorant. Honour these, if not in person, at least by proxy. There are penitentiaries, hospitals, schools around, where an unmercenary love, which money can neither create nor buy, relieves human wants, bodily and spiritual, in the name of Christ, and therefore with the tenderness of respect. Assist some one of these works of mercy, by denying yourselves something that you will really miss ; so that when Easter comes you may have part in that joy whose sweetness is proportioned to the Sacrifice that precedes it—a Sacrifice offered to God, in the interests and for the honour of man.

UNIVERSITY SERMONS, First Series, p. 56.

The Law of Progress

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”—PHIL. iii. 13, 14.

IN these fervid words the Apostle is correcting a misapprehension which might have been occasioned by his previous language. If we may argue from the absence of censure and the warmth of commendation which distinguish this Epistle, the Church of Philippi, in point of spiritual attainments, must have been in the first rank, if not absolutely first, among the Apostolical Churches. Yet even the Philippians needed a passing warning. Active and mischievous teachers were abroad who would fain have placed the Sacrifice of Calvary and the Sacraments of the New Covenant on the level of the legal shadows which pointed to them, and who would have imprisoned the Catholic Church within the narrow precincts of their national synagogue. St. Paul appeals to his own case against the Judaizers. He had actually *enjoyed those distinctions of race and blood, of exact*

compliance with the prescriptions of the ancient ritual, of high religious standing, of public consideration and personal character which they so earnestly coveted or recommended. At the bidding of Heaven, he had taken the true measure of these things, and had renounced them. "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh" (*i.e.* the outward legal privileges insisted on by the Judaizers), "I more : circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews ; as touching the law, a Pharisee ; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church ; touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless. But what things were gain unto me, those I counted loss for Christ" (Phil. iii. 4-7). This estimate he proceeds to justify by enumerating some distinctive and counterbalancing privileges and attractions of the Gospel. He first names Christ's gift of a divine righteousness received by the hand of faith. Then Christ's Resurrection power, raising man's whole moral nature from the tomb of sin and selfishness. To these, writing from his Roman prison, the Apostle adds the mysterious fellowship with Christ's awful sufferings, which soothe, sweeten, sanctify, ennoble human pain, and transform it into a renovating moral force.

Did, then, this one mighty moral act by which St. Paul had passed from nature to grace, from error to truth, from Judaism to the Church, so epitomize and contain in itself his whole spiritual history as to make all further aspirations, movements, efforts, superfluous? Something

of this kind hath at various times moved the minds of unspiritual men, who have desired by one great sacrifice to compound with Heaven, and so to escape from the responsibility, from the wearing and commonplace trials of a daily struggle. They have taken it for granted that the probation of a soul, instead of being continued to the hour of death, is practically limited to one heroic action, to one sharp pang of suffering in mind or body, to one sacrifice cheerfully accepted for the sake of Christ. They have accounted conversion to be not merely a renunciation of the past, but an insurance of the future beyond risk of forfeiture.


Not thus, however, was it with the great Apostle. He protests against the thought of "his having already attained, or being already perfect." At his conversion, he maintains, Christ had lain hold on him to enable him to attain that for which he was still striving. His first protest is followed up by a second yet more earnest and emphatic, both in its disavowal of satisfaction with present attainments, and in its energetic description of the onward upward impulse of an Apostle's life. The language is sensibly coloured by the image of the Greek racer. The race is undecided: "I count not myself to have apprehended." In the eager pressure of the struggle, the racer cannot measure the ground which he has already traversed; he forgets those things which are behind. He reaches forward to those things which are before. "The bodily attitude exactly picturing the mental impulse both in its posture and direction." He

presses forward towards the mark for the prize with which He Who had called him from heaven was at length to bless him. The things behind which he forgets, are not merely the external prerogatives of Judaism. As the metaphor would itself suggest, they are the earlier struggles, the past experiences, the incomplete attainments of the Christian. He may by-and-by within (as it would seem) three months of his martyrdom, pause and draw breath, in the moral assurance of victory: "I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Be it however remembered, that when St. Paul is writing to the Philippians, that entire section of his life which is described in the Acts of the Apostles is already past. What had been at first a mere external and human appreciation of his Saviour, had long yielded to a profoundly spiritual recognition of his glory; "he knows Christ after the flesh no more." Already he has written his greatest Epistles, he has founded his noblest Churches; nay more, he has even been caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words. Yet he forgets those things which are behind, and reaches forward. For his life is true to the law which is obeyed by the highest as by the lowest of the true servants of Christ; it is a life of progress.

In the Apostle's words we seem, within the sanctuary, to catch the echo of one of those most familiar and most powerful watchwords which from time to time rally around them the thoughts and determine the activities of

the great outside world of men. In each age public human life has its watchwords ; it has its representative language, no less than its representative man. These watchwords do, as a matter of fact, shape the thoughts and efforts of multitudes. Even the practical, un-speculative spirit of Englishmen does not afford a guarantee against their influence. They are proclaimed with an accent of sincerity and conviction by the earnest few. They are echoed, in an imitative, an indolent, a self-seeking spirit by the less thoughtful many. They claim notice at the hands of Christians just so far as they may seem to affect the higher, that is, the moral and eternal interests of men. No watchword can become the rallying cry of large masses of men, who differ in temper, interests, station, and blood, without containing a certain germ of truth, however that truth may be mis-applied, overlaid, and even caricatured. . . .

In our own days no rallying cry has gained more prominence or exerted more power than the demand for Progress. The most opposite aspirations, aye, the most earnest and determined antagonists, range themselves simultaneously under the banner of Progress. Government, society, art, science, even religion, are in turn challenged, reviewed, judged, in the name of Progress. The source and motive of progress is a sense of want, of shortcoming. It is the very voice of truth, which confesses imperfections and yearns to rise. This true, this humble sense of actual imperfection is provoked and kept alive by a vision, an ideal of possible perfection



which haunts the secret soul of man, and which is a relic of Eden. Man was created for God ; and the depths of the human soul, even in its ruin, bear witness to the original greatness of the human destiny. The unreflecting, unruffled contentment of the creatures around us contrasts sharply with the unsatisfied yearnings of man. The placid repose of the brutes is never troubled by any impulse or attraction which leads them to yearn for a state higher or nobler than their present existence. But in man, something, be it a memory or an anticipation, is perpetually protesting against the actual attainments of human life and stimulating him to seek a more perfect and a higher condition. Underlying sin, sense, misconception, weakness, this shadowy perception of an ideal greatness, this craving for a beauty which transcends the reality of experience, is continually upheaving thought and society ; it is pouring itself forth, whether in graduated movements, or in volcanic eruptions ; it is allying itself often with all that is true and noble, and not seldom with the destructive energies of pure evil. But however various and perverted the result, the original impulse is from God. It is the creature, craving—whether in morals, or society, or art, or speculation, or whatever department of man's activity—for something beyond its actual attainments. It is the effort to satisfy an unquenchable thirst for the Infinite.

Allied to this sense of ideal perception is the mighty power of Hope. Hope nerves man's arms while it gladdens his heart. Hope is the lever which moves

human nature. Without hope man's knowledge may be but the measure of his despair. Doubtless this desire for an unattained perfection, this sanguine reaching after a still distant blessing, may fail, and fail grievously, of securing its true object. It may be seduced by attractive insincerities, and prostituted to odious and irreligious endeavours. But its very errors bear witness to its strength, while they may not blind us to the greatness of its origin.

But is not this same yearning for an unattained perfection, joined to a hope that such anxiety will not be disappointed, among the dispositions which most readily welcome Revelation to its throne within the soul? Was not Revelation itself for long ages a perpetual progress? Was it not a Progress from Eden to Moriah, a Progress from Moriah to Sinai, a Progress from Sinai to Calvary? Did not the whole form and spirit of the Patriarchal faith declare plainly that the first fathers of Israel sought a country? Was not the Law a servant charged with the duty of leading the Jew to the school of Jesus Christ, both by discovering to his conscience its moral needs, and by typically foreshadowing the Atonement, the Spirit, and the Sacraments, which would satisfy them? Were not the Prophets, each and all, ministers of Progress? Their predictive gift pointed towards the future; their moral energies carried men forward, whether from ceremonialism to a truer service, or from scepticism to faith, or from despair to energy, or from sheer ungodliness to the natural virtues, or from the ordinary level of the

natural virtues to the height of the heroic and the supernatural. Certainly when He came, to Whom, directly or indirectly, by implication or explicitly, all His prophets pointed, He brought from heaven a Body of Truth containing whatever we now know in respect of questions which must always possess the deepest interest for the human soul; He told us all that is to be apprehended here concerning life and death, and God and eternity. Thus the essential faith of Christendom is fixed. No advance is possible in the way of enlarging the dogmatic area of the Creed by a process of accretive development. For the Revelation made and delivered by our Lord and His Apostles was final and sufficient. But the Faith, itself unchangeable and Divine, has nevertheless become, both in the world at large and in separate souls, a principle of Progress. On the one hand, through the Church it leavens the world so gradually, that only in our own days and with notorious difficulty is it completing its triumph over the long-tolerated evils of duelling and slavery. On the other, the Apostle in the text is himself a sample of its progressive and elevating power within the precincts of the human soul. That it has enriched and is still enriching human thought, that it has ennobled and is ennobling human character, that it has given an original impulse to entire sciences, and created virtues that were impossible without it, are simply matters of fact. No hostility to Christian doctrine can justify indifference to the truth that the world owes to Christianity the natural idea of Progress, and the one serious attempt

to realize it. . . . A true Progress must be the Progress of man. I say, of man himself, as distinct from the organization, appliances, or embellishments of his life ; as distinct, in short, from anything that is properly outside him.

Contrast this obvious and vital truth with one of the most general conceptions of Progress at the present day. What is too often meant by our public writers and public speakers when they periodically celebrate the triumphs or stimulate the energies of Progress? Surely they mean, first and chiefly, that which ministers comfort, enjoyment, dignity, well-being to man's outward life. To promote or to rivet man's empire over the world of matter, to organize human life in such sort, that you secure to the individual the highest amount of personal enjoyment which is compatible with the interests of the community at large ;—that is Progress. Political reforms, great constructive efforts, rapid locomotion, sanitary improvements, vast accumulations of capital, seconded by vast outlays, inventions which economize labour, or which relieve pain ;—these are Progress. Egypt with her colossal public works, Greece with her freedom of personal action, Rome with her imperial organization, Tyre or Corinth with their industrial activities—these, rather than Jerusalem, are the chosen types of Progress. Progress is almost a marketable commodity : it can be measured, weighed, valued. Mental speculation that does not invent, or that cannot be utilized ; morals which do not *sanction this* or that economical theory, or subserve

the lower instincts of an Epicureanized society ;—these are the enemies of Progress. We are bidden compare English life of to-day, in its outward aspects, with the life of Englishmen in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, or to the life of our grandfathers. We are referred to the growth of the national Constitution, continued through centuries and still in process of development ; to the marvellous productiveness of the daily press ; to the foundation of cities and colonies on the other side of the Atlantic or beyond the equator, which in a few years have achieved improvement and successes that has cost Europe centuries of labour and suffering. “ See,” cry the prophets of material Progress, “ how we are gradually completing the conquest of nature, and putting all things in subjection under our feet. From city to city, from country to country, from continent to continent the electric wire flashes forth our thought or our resolution almost with the accuracy or swiftness of a bodily or of a mental faculty. Our art is no longer bound down to the slow and disappointing travail of the brush or of the pencil ; the light of heaven is itself an artist ready to our hand, and a likeness of faultless accuracy, which would have been impossible even after years of labour to the miniature painters of the last generation, can be insured by our chemistry with mechanical certainty in the course of a few seconds. Steam-power, as if it were a living creature which we had trained and harnessed, has rendered us well-nigh independent of distance and of fatigue, we do not consult, we all but

control the winds and the waves. We descend into the bowels of the earth; we draw forth from its hidden caverns the gas or the petroleum; we reverse the original arrangements of Providence, and we turn the night of our great cities into day. But, forgetting these things that are behind, we look forward to those things that are before. New discoveries, new inventions, new triumphs await us or our children. There are yet secrets which may be wrung from nature; there are yet playing around us, above us, beneath us, awful and subtle powers or properties which may in time become the slaves of man. It is true that, as contrasted with our grandfathers, we are great and powerful; yet for our descendants there is reserved a land of promise compared with which our modern civilization is but as the desert. Our children will assuredly witness an advance of man's power over the materials around him, which will throw the achievements of the present time utterly into the shade; the attainments of which we are so proud to-day will be deemed by our posterity as little better than the higher efforts of an effete barbarism."

To these enthusiasms the Church of God replies in no narrow or unfriendly spirit; she has not so forgotten the blessing of Eden, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it" (Gen. ix. i.), as to look with a jaundiced eye on the varied and mighty products of the hands and brains of the sons of men. Nay, more, we Christians do not grudgingly admit, we vehemently assert on the part of Religion, that material

progress does contribute real though indirect service to the higher, that is, to the moral interests of man. And it will be noted with special thankfulness by those who have at heart something of their Lord's love of the poor and feeble, that the lower you descend in the scale of society, the more distinctly can you estimate the greatness of the debt which the soul of man owes to progressive improvements, whether in the ordering of society itself, or in the utilization of matter.

But at the same time, let us never forget it, society may be well organized, while man himself is barbarous and brutish. And yet more certain, man's conquests over matter are no adequate measure of the true progress of man. For man, although dwelling in a material form, and on the confines of a world of matter, is yet in himself an imperishable and spiritual being, linked by his higher nature to an immaterial world. Man can analyze, mould, and employ matter precisely because he is superior to it. He cannot himself, in his inmost being, be raised by that which is beneath him, and which yields to the vigour of his thought and of his hands. Comprehend, my brethren, your matchless dignity in your Creator's world. Each of you *has*, nay, each of you *is*, that with which nothing material, be it force or magnitude or law, be it fluid or mineral, be it atom or planet, can rightly challenge comparison. Each of you is, in the depths of his personality, a spiritual substance. This substance is without extent, without form, without colour, unseen, impalpable. This

substance is so subtle, that in its mysterious and inaccessible retreats, it can be detected neither by the knife of the anatomist nor by the keen observation of the psychologist. This substance is so living and strong, that each member, each nerve of your body, each fold, each tissue of your brain, is at once its instrument and the proof of its presence, and its empire. The human soul! who that has pondered, even superficially, over the mysterious depths of life within him—depths of which he knows so little, yet which are so intimately himself—can submit to the falsehood and degradation of the theory which makes man's real progress to consist of a mere succession to the external modifications of senseless matter?

Let it be thankfully and joyfully granted that, as a means to a higher end, material improvement is a healthful condition of human life, and a blessing from God. But its exaggeration, at the expense of that which it should subserve, is a curse than which none is more fatal to the progress of man. When the sense of the Unseen and the Eternal and all the finer sympathies have been crushed out by the dead weight or worship of matter, man sinks in the creation of God, even though he should learn to wield more and more power year by year over the dead atoms around him. A high material civilization does but arm the human brute with new instruments of his lust or his ferocity, unless it go hand in hand with a power that can penetrate his heart and mould his will. When the ruling tendencies and studies of society are

materialized, the human soul is condemned to an inevitable degradation. There is a subtle law of assimilation whereby man, in his deepest life, receives an impress from the object on which his gaze is habitually fixed. Those who gaze heavenward are, as the Apostle tells us, changed by the Image of Perfect Beauty from one to another degree of glory. Those who look downwards and earthwards receive as certainly the stamp and likeness of the things beneath them. They lose their hold by a progressive declension on all that sublimates and ennobles human life. They sink downward and deeper, till at length they discover in man himself nothing but the anatomy or chemistry of his body. They seek at length, and they find it themselves and in their brother men, the mere animal. They reckon the very idea of a moral and spiritual destiny or capacity to be but a mere freak of human conceit, or a snare of priestly imposition. When we consider these depths of what is, alas ! far from being an imaginary degradation, we learn to estimate at its true value the doctrine of a mere material progress. Whatever else may be said of it, it cannot be said to be human ; it cannot be pressed on our sympathies and attention on the ground of being the progress of man as man.

The Idea of Religion

"Show Thou me the way that I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto Thee."—PSALM cxliiii. 8.

THE indispensableness of religion to human life has been forced on the mind of this generation by a deeper study of history. The more we know of the annals of our race, the more clearly is it seen how the greatest catastrophes, and the most profound and far-reaching changes, have really turned upon religious questions; and that the stronger and more definite has been the religion, the more fundamental and striking have been the results. Thus, for instance, the modern history of Europe has been little else than a history of struggles fundamentally religious. Religion does not cease to influence events among those who reject its claims: it excites the strongest human passions, not merely in its defenders, but in its enemies. The claim to hold communion with an unseen world irritates, when it does not win and satisfy. Atheism has again and again been a fanaticism; it has been a missionary and a persecutor by turns; it is lashed into passion by the very presence of the sublime passion by

which it is opposed. We of to-day know well that no political subjects are discussed so warmly as those which bear even remotely upon religion. "The deepest subject," says Goethe, "in the history of the world and of mankind, and that to which all others are subordinate, is the conflict between faith and unbelief." While these causes make an interest in religion of whatever kind, inevitable among thoughtful men in our day and generation, they only reinforce, they do not obscure or supersede those permanent reasons for its influence which are part of our natural and human circumstances. Among these it may suffice to mention one. It is a fact, certain to each one of us, that we shall individually die. If science could arrest the empire of death, as it has limited that of disease; if thought, on its onward march throughout the centuries, could rob us utterly of the presentiment of an immortality, and of our aspirations towards a higher world, then religion would retain, in the fixed circumstances of life, no ally of anything like equal power. But there is the certainty, present to each one of us in our thoughtful moments, never entirely absent from the thoughts of those who seriously think at all, that the hour will come when we shall face the problem of problems for ourselves and alone; when we shall know by experience what really is beyond the veil, and how it is related to that which we see and are here; and it is impossible, with this prospect before us, to treat the voice and claims of religion as wholly trivial and unimportant.

And here the question arises as to what it is that man

seeks in seeking religion, or rather, What is religion? We know it when we meet it in life; we know it by its bearing, by its fruits, by the atmosphere with which it surrounds itself. But what is it within the soul? What is its chief element or substance? What is this power which does not meet the eye, but which we trace in its results? What is the true psychological account that must be given of it?

As we repeat the question, "What is religion?" we find ourselves, it may be, in the position of standing face to face with a very old acquaintance, with whose countenance and habits we have been familiar all our lives, but of whose real self we cannot but feel we have a somewhat shadowy perception.

Is religion, then, in the heart of man, to be looked upon as the highest and purest form of feeling? Is feeling the essential thing in true religion? Nor if we look either into the recesses of the human heart, or into the historical expressions of religious earnestness, can the right place of feeling be rightly depreciated. Feeling is the play of our consciousness coming into contact with its object; it varies in intensity according to the interest we take in that object; it is a totally different thing in the case of a casual acquaintance, and of a near relative. When, then, the soul is in intimate contact with the Object of objects—with God,—feeling, the purest and most intense, is not merely legitimate, but ordinarily inevitable. How much of the Psalter is feeling—the tenderest, the strongest, the most loyal, the most

affectionate! "Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?" "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee!" "My soul hangeth upon Thee. Thy right hand hath upholden me." "Am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee: yea, I hate them right sore, even as though they were mine enemies!" How profoundly is the religion of St. Paul, as we study it in his Epistles, penetrated by feeling! Always in felt contact with an unseen Master; he is tender, he is vehement, he burns, he is melted. His dispositions towards his fellow-men are so various and keen, because in him feeling has been educated in a higher Presence—"The love of Christ constraineth us!" "To me to live is Christ." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha." But the question is not whether feeling be an element of sincere religion, but whether it be the one most essential element.

In the long run, there can be, for well-ordered minds, no strong play of feeling apart from the sense of the intellectual truth of the object upon which feeling is bestowed. To lavish feeling, if it be possible to do so, upon a person who is even suspected of being mythical or half mythical is to prostitute feeling. Some idea,

then, of the object of feeling must precede the feeling, as well as a conviction of the truth of the object so conceived of. We are told that religious feeling is especially the sense of entire dependence upon a Higher Power : man's inmost soul hangs confidently upon the Power in which we live and move and have our being. But then what is this power ? That is a question which must be answered before feeling can determine its complexion. Is this power an impersonal force ? is it a blind fate or destiny ? is it some vast machine, having neither heart nor will, but moving onward through endless cycles of destructions and recombinations, of life and death, unceasingly, resistlessly, inexorably ? If so, feeling at least cannot take the form of absolute dependence : there is no such thing as surrendering yourself in trustful resignation to a piece of machinery, which may crush you to death at any moment in its advance. Trustful dependence is only possible when that on which we depend is seen to be a Person, and a *moral* Person, that is to say holy, truthful, compassionate, just. But here we pass out of the region of feeling. It appears that before feeling can trust itself, something is wanted to guide and colour it. Knowledge is at least as essential to religion as feeling ; and knowledge of the Object of religion, expressed in clear and precise terms, is after all only another name for dogma. But moreover, feeling, even if intelligent, must accompany right moral effort, in order to be religious. . . . Feeling is not necessarily moral purpose ; and its possible deficiencies on this side, as well as on

the side of knowledge, show that we cannot alone regard it as forming the raw material of religious life. . . .

Is it, then, more nearly true to say that the one essential thing in religion is knowledge—knowledge of God and of the things of God? The knowledge of truth is of vital importance to religion. No one would question this. Religion is impossible without some knowledge of its object; and our capacities for true religious life must, to a certain extent vary with our varying degrees of religious knowledge. “This,” says our Saviour, “is life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hath sent” (St. John xvii. 3). The knowledge spoken of here, and elsewhere in the Bible, is not merely intellectual: it is in knowledge in act; it is the knowledge which is won by love and obedience, as distinct from, although altogether with, intelligence. Nevertheless, knowledge, in its ordinary sense of information apprehended by the understanding, is indispensable to religion. Light is not the power of walking or working; but we cannot walk or work blindfolded without disaster.

Yet no mere action of the intelligence, however active, upon the subject-matter of religion, is the true backbone of religion. Knowledge alone may only enhance responsibility. If Christ had not come and spoken to the Jews, “they had not had sin:” as it was, they had “no cloke for their sin” (John xv. 22). St. Paul contrasts a merely intelligent apprehension of religious subjects with love. “Knowledge,” he says, “puffeth up, but charity

edifieth" (1 Cor. viii. 1). The whole drift of St. James's Epistle goes to show the worthlessness, religiously speaking, of unfruitful knowledge. The hearer of the Word who is not a doer, is compared with the man who continueth in the perfect law of liberty besides looking into it. The first does but realize a fleeting and unproductive impression : the second has undergone a change of life.

Intelligence, indeed, however cultivated, is only a department of human life. Man is something greater than a cultivated intellect; even than an intellect cultivated by study of the highest objects that can be presented to it,—by study of the things of God. More than this is needed to constitute religion ; which, if it be not merely a sentiment or passion, so certainly is it more than an intellectual effort, however serious be its purpose or sublime its goal.

We must certainly admit that religion has no more appropriate work than the regulation of human life in accordance with moral truth ; it is in this province especially that we look for evidences of its reality and its power. "By their fruits ye shall know them" (S. Matt. vii. 16), said its one great Master, of certain religious aspirants. "Pure religion," according to His Apostle, "and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (S. James i. 27). In other words, it is active philanthropy and personal purity. The language used to describe it in the Bible, implies that knowledge of religion and religious emotion are, as we have seen, worse than incomplete, if they do

not lead to active goodness. What a man knows or feels is of little import, until it is ascertained what he does, or rather what he is. . . .

It is when man has caught sight of the one Perfect Being, and in the effort to escape from the weakness and degradations of his own earthly life, "lifts up his soul" to the unseen, all-powerful, all-bountiful Friend, that he may hope to discover the true ideal of his life, and to realize it. Religion is thus the constant spring and best guarantee of morality ; but morality is not the "essence of religion." Religion consists fundamentally in the practical recognition of a constraining bond between the inward life of man and an unseen Person.

The ancients were fond of discussing the derivation of the word religion ; and Cicero refers it to that anxious habit of mind which comes over and over again all that bears on the service of heaven. Lactantius has certainly seized the broad popular sense of the word, when he connects it with the idea of an obligation by which man is bound to an invisible Lord.

With this the Biblical phraseology is in substantial harmony. The expressions which describe the religion of the earliest Patriarchs are in point ; and, like much else in the Pentateuch, they mould the later language of the Psalter. Enoch and Noah are said to have "walked with God ;" Abraham was bidden "walk before the face of God, and be perfect" (Gen. v. 24).

Here God is represented as the bounden Companion of a man's life, as well as his all-surveying Judge and

Master ; and this idea of religion as personal devotedness to God underlies all the representations of Scripture on the subject. Religion in the understanding, is the knowledge of God—of His will and commandments ; it is the knowledge of His “mystery” or secret counsel revealed in Christ (Eph. i. 17). When the Jewish law had been given, religion was practically a “walking in the law of the Lord ;” when the Christian revelation has been made, it is an “acknowledgment of the truth which is after godliness” (Tit. i. 1). But in this truth, in that law, it seeks a Person ; it is fundamentally the maintenance of a real relation with a Personal God, or with a Divine Person really incarnate in Christ Jesus. Accordingly, religion, both Jewish and Christian, is described as a covenant ; it is a bond or understanding between the nation or the soul and God ; or, still more, from the point of view of a faith that worketh by love, it is personal communion with God. “That which we have seen and heard,” says S. John, “declare we unto you, that ye also may have communion with us : and truly our communion is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 S. John i. 3).

Thus religious life is more than feeling, since feeling may be physical, misdirected, selfish. It is more than knowledge, which, even if it be complete and accurate, may fail to govern the moral nature. It is more than obedience to a moral code, because such obedience, if sufficiently complete to be religious, already implies relations to the Lawgiver. And yet religion is feeling ;

it is mental illumination ; it is especially moral effort ; because it is that which implies, and comprehends, and combines them all. It is the sacred bond, freely accepted, generously, enthusiastically, persistently welcomed, whereby the soul engages to make a continuous expenditure of its highest powers in attaching itself to the Personal Source and Object of its being. It is the tie by which the soul binds itself to God, its true Friend. To be thus bound to a person, is to cherish strong, nay, passionate feelings towards him ; it is to seek to know all that can be known about his wishes and character, and to register the knowledge in exact terms ; it is to obey scrupulously all that is clearly ascertained to be his will. "Show Thou me the way that I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto Thee : " this is the language of feeling pure and strong ; it is the language of intelligence ever desiring a higher knowledge of its Highest Object ; it is the language of obedience the most absolute that man can proffer. It is these, because it is the voice, the exceeding great cry of that unquenchable passion, of that irrepressible aspiration, whereby the soul of man shows forth its truest dignity and highest virtue in seeking the better to know and love and serve its Highest and Invisible Object ; because, in a word, it is the language of religion.

SOME ELEMENTS OF RELIGION, Crown 8vo., p. 6.

Historic Interest of the Life of Jesus

“Jesus asked them saying, What think ye of Christ?”—ST. MATT.
xxiii. 41.

“WHAT think ye of Christ?” Is He a subject of the highest historical interest? No educated man, at least, whatever be his faith or his life, can deny the reality of the greatness of Christ’s place in human history. Nothing is more certain in the annals of mankind than this, that Jesus Christ lived in Palestine, and was put to death eighteen centuries and a half ago. The fact belongs to general human knowledge, just as much as does the life of Julius Cæsar, or of Alexander the Great, or of Socrates, or of Mahomet. Nobody, indeed, does deny the general fact. . . . The life and death of Jesus Christ must possess for any intelligent man the highest possible degree of interest. He must feel that, in point of social and historical importance, it stands alone. No doubt, at the time, the Cæsar Tiberius was everywhere on the lips and in the minds of men; while the retired religious Teacher, as He seemed to be, in Palestine, was by His teaching, His acts, and the opposition which they aroused, only furnishing a little conversation and excitement to

the peasantry and the officials of a remote province. But if the importance of a life is to be measured by its results on history and to civilization, even although we should put all religious and even moral considerations aside, who would think most of the Emperor? What is the lasting and living interest which Tiberius now exerts upon the world, except it be to furnish a thesis now and then to clever essay writers, who wish indirectly to attack or to defend modern imperialism? But who can deny that at this moment, explain it how we will, Jesus Christ, His Life, His Work, His Person, lives in the hearts of multitudes as the object of the most cherished and devoted homage; that He governs the ideas, the aspirations, the social and political actions of millions of mankind; that the most active and enterprising section of the human family, still, in various senses, places itself under the shadow of His Name and patronage; and that if He has many opponents, there is no serious possibility of His being spiritually or intellectually dethroned? All this is a matter of simple observation. The truth is most obvious to those who know most about human affairs and human history, and it at once invests the earthly Life of Christ, and all that illustrates and belongs to it, with the highest practical and speculative interest; with the interest which belongs to the great problems of past history, and with the interest which belongs to those great living forces that make themselves felt day by day around us, and contribute powerfully towards determining the current of events.

Not to be interested in the life of Jesus Christ is to be, I do not say irreligious, but unintelligent. It is to be insensible to the nature and claims of the most powerful force that has ever moulded the thoughts and swayed the destinies of civilized man. But to feel this interest, it is almost unnecessary to add, a man need not even profess to be a Christian; He may, indeed, be earnestly opposed to Christianity; and his opposition can scarcely in any case be formidable, unless he has given his mind to the careful study of that which he opposes. To such men as Celsus, or Lucian, or Porphyry, or the apostate Emperor Julian, or the philosopher of Ferney, Christianity was a matter of the deepest intellectual interest. Men do not write like Celsus, or act like Julian, or epigrammatize with the bitterness of Voltaire, about a doctrine in which they feel little concerned. . . .

This is the full and solemn truth, that Jesus Christ is not merely the Teacher, but the substance of Christianity, not merely the author of the faith which Christians profess, but its central object. For Christians the popular phrase, "the religion of Christ," means the devotion, the submission of thought and heart, the sense of obligation, the voluntary enthusiastic service, of which He, together and equally with the Father, is the rightful and everlasting Object; which, when He was on earth, He claimed as His due, and which has been rendered to Him now for more than eighteen hundred years by the best and noblest of the human race.

In Jesus Christ, then, we have the guarantee or bond

of religion ; He is the means of an actual communication between the soul of man and the Eternal God. "There is one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5). He is the Mediator by virtue of the very terms of His Being : His office of Mediation is based upon the two natures which are united in His Single Person. On the one hand, as the Eternal Son, He is One with the All-Holy and Infinite God ; on the other, as the child of Mary, He shares all the finiteness and weakness of our manhood,—He shares everything with it except its sin. Thus He impersonates and maintains, by the very fact of being what He is, a true vital bond between earth and Heaven. To us men, He is the last and most complete unveiling of the interest which God takes in the well-being of His moral and reasonable creatures ; the highest Organ of the Divine Mind and Will ; the only and certain channel of those "unsearchable riches" which flow down from the Fountain of all goodness upon the beings whom He has made. Before the Majesty of God He is the unique and ideal Representative of our race ; He represents us, not as being what we are, but as what we were meant to be by the Great Author of our existence. And yet, although we are only weak and sinful, we may unite ourselves to Him by faith, and love, and contrition for the past, and "be accepted in the Beloved." His obedience as Man, reaching its climax in the self-sacrifice of the Cross, becomes ours through His free grace and mercy. His invigorating life, which restores our race to its original strength and beauty, is

still communicated to us by His Spirit and His Sacraments; so that all who will may "put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of their minds; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 22). This cannot be done by fallen man by himself, and out of the resources of his warped and impoverished nature. But "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Being, as he is, Divine as well as human, Jesus is "made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification and Redemption." Thus, in union with Him, those religious aspirations, which are part of our natural outfit, find their true exercise, their full satisfaction. As the Light of the world, He is the satisfaction of the intellect. As "Fairer than the children of men," He is the delight of the heart. As "Holy harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," He challenges the submission of the will. Intellect, feeling, moral effort, each have their part in Him. He recognizes, He consecrates them. He leads them upwards in and through His own holy Humanity to the All-wise and All-beautiful. The soul finds that in Him "is the well of Life, and that in His light we shall see light."

Does it seem inconceivable that the Eternal Son of God should have indeed thus come among us men, to

teach and to save us ; to make reconciliation between us and the Almighty Father ; to bestow on us the priceless gift of a new Nature ; and to lead us back, first one and then another, to our true home and peace ? Certainly, it may well move our wonder to think of such grace and mercy. The Christian creed, when once it becomes precious to us, takes us altogether out of the daily range of earthly thoughts and interests, lifting us into a better and brighter, but not more mysterious or less real world than this. The Incarnation and Death of the Everlasting Son seem impossible only because we do not steadily reflect upon the simple but momentous truths which lie at the root of all religion, and which all who are not Materialists or Pantheists generally admit. Is the Incarnation so improbable, think you, if God is indeed a Moral Being, if man has an immortal soul, if moral evil is so inherently deadly in itself and in its effects ? Do we not name "God," "immortality," "sin," without thinking what we mean ; as if these tremendous words were the symbols of trivial commonplaces, which implied nothing beyond themselves ? And is not this careless treatment of these solemn truths which we profess to own the reason why many of us do not understand the truths beyond them ? If the awfulness and magnificence of God, the reality of Eternity, the power and sting of moral evil, were more often subjects of our thought, would our imaginations be so startled, as they often are, by those doctrines of grace which adjust and harmonize what else is so full of perplexity ; by the Incarnation of

the Blessed Son of God ; by His plenary atonement on the cross for the sins of men ; by His unceasing intercession for us before the Father ; by the sanctifying energy of His Holy Spirit ; by the power of His Sacraments to renew and sustain our life? Surely the earlier truths are just as full of difficulty for the imagination and reason as the latter. We put them out of sight as being less importunate, but there they are. That the All-foreseeing and Holy God should have created us at all, is at least as startling as that, having created, He should have redeemed us. Or rather, when we reflect upon His Morality, upon His Justice, upon His Love, must we not think that His redemption of the fallen is really less wonderful than His creation of a race capable of such signal failure? Must we not find in our daily experience of life, of the crimes and sufferings which so largely compose it, more embarrassment and distress for reverent reason than can be furnished by critical speculations upon the explanatory and consoling truth, that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (St. John iii. 16)? "Whosoever believeth in Him"—it is not then, you say, a matter of strict mathematical demonstration. No, it is not a matter of strict mathematical demonstration. If it were, there would be no more room for faith than there is in the process of learning a proposition of Euclid. Not to acquiesce in the conclusion of a proposition of Euclid, is to be intellectually deficient. But to refuse assent to the Christian creed does not

necessarily imply intellectual deficiency. Why not? Because for such assent moral dispositions are necessary as well as intellectual capacity. The evidence for Christianity intellectually viewed is something short of mathematical, and intentionally so. Christian truth makes a demand upon the will as well as upon the intellect; and the will, to avoid the foreseen consequences of assent, will often prevent the intellect from doing its work, honestly and thoroughly, in investigating the claims of Christ. This is the reason why so much store is set upon faith in St. Paul's Epistles. Faith is a text of the moral drift of our whole being, and not merely of the soundness and acuteness of our mental powers. If an act of faith in Jesus Christ implied no more than an assent to the conclusion of a demonstrated proposition; if faith were nothing higher and nobler than the forced results of a victorious assault upon the human understanding, conducted by columns and batteries of mathematical evidence; then all that is said about its moral and spiritual worth, about its purifying and elevating power, would be simply unintelligible. The most accomplished mathematician is not necessarily moral; and the most fervent believers ancient or modern have not been always Pascals and Newtons. Our Lord did, indeed, by His miracles, and notably by His resurrection, address Himself to the experience of His contemporaries in enforcing His claims; and by certain portions of His teaching He appealed no less truly to the operations of their natural reason. But in order to accept Him as He

is, reason and observation must be seconded by the heart and the conscience; there must be a true desire to know all that can be known of the Author of the law of right and wrong within us. There must be a real anxiety to escape from the moral anomalies of life, a recognition and sense of human goodness, an anticipation that He Who is its Source cannot have left us in weakness and darkness to struggle alone. Why this temper is found in one man and not in another, is a question which carries us back into the deepest secrets of our several moral natures; into the varying histories of our loyalty or disloyalty to God's original gift of natural light. But upon the existence or non-existence of such moral dispositions depends our way of looking at the evidence which Jesus Christ has thought good to set before us on behalf of His claims. In one case that evidence will appear sufficient: insufficient in another. It will be held insufficient by the man who thinks to become a believing Christian, as he would become a mathematician, without any reference to the temper of his heart, or even in spite of its decided bent against the moral teaching of the Gospel. It will be deemed sufficient—nay, more than sufficient—for those who with perplexities are "waiting for the consolation of Israel." They understand that religious truth, to be embraced at all to any purpose, must be embraced, not simply by a dry assent of the logical understanding, but by a vital act of the whole inward man, by moral sympathies even more earnestly than by an intellectual grasp. Christ, our Lord, in various ways teaches

us as much as this; and Christian apologists can only make that portion of the act of faith which belongs to the understanding easier to it, by removing obstacles to the reception of truth, or by exhibiting its inward harmonies. They cannot, if they would, do the work of the Divine Spirit, and control the fevers, the prejudices, the cowardice, the rashness of the heart. He only Who made the heart can soften, or subdue, or change it. He only Who made the light to shine out of darkness can so shine in the heart of men, as to "give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6.).

And they to whom He has taught this great lesson will know, and feel, that believing in the Divinity of our Incarnate Lord, we stand as it were on the heights of Pisgah; and that a new and vast prospect, grateful to eyes that are wearied with the long glare of the desert, is opening before us. Before us is a land of vineyards and olive yards, a land flowing with milk and honey. It is a region of repose for faith and love; it is an atmosphere where communion with God is easy and natural. It is the proper home of spirituality and benevolence, of that internal and external practise of religion, day by day, which is so altogether higher and better a thing than the profoundest study of its theory. For the Divinity of the Son of God is the adequate warrant of all His promises; of the power of His death; of the Gift of His Spirit; of the efficacy of His Sacraments; of the converting and hallowing power of His written

Word ; of the Divine character of that society of souls which, by His Spirit, He has organized into His Church since the day of Pentecost. How vast is their range, how interesting in their idea and scope, how energetically practical in their bearings on all earnest life, are these great Christian doctrines which form the hills and vales of our Gospel Land of Promise ! We strain our eyes ; we would fain go forward to study their beauties, to try, if it might be, to understand and to surmount their difficulties. But it cannot be—at least now. If only we sincerely cling by faith and love to our Divine and Human Lord, all else will follow. For the present, like the Magdalen, we can but hold Him by the Feet, and entreat Him to teach us that personal devotedness to Himself which is the secret and soul of genuine religion ; since without it the love of God soon dies away into an attenuated mysticism, while the love of man is eventually hollowed out into a mechanical philanthropy. Thinking of Him, praying to Him, working for Him day by day, as our living, tender, mighty infallible Friend, we strengthen our hold upon the one certain bond between earth and heaven : upon Him through Whom, in all our feebleness and sin, we have real access in one Spirit unto the Father.

Personal devotion to Jesus Christ is the exercise of thought, and of affection, steadily directed upon His adorable Person. But it is also the exercise of will : it is pre-eminently practical. There is much to be abstained from for His sake ; there is much to be done and to be

endured ; there is some danger, perhaps of our doing nothing very definite, where the opportunities of action are so various and so complex, and therefore, that you may do something for Jesus Christ now and here, you are asked to support with alms the object for which I plead, etc.

SOME ELEMENTS OF RELIGION, crown 8vo., p. 210.

Prayer the Characteristic Action of Religion

"Ask and it shall be given you."—ST. MATT. vii. 7.

RELIGION is the bond between the soul and God, which sin, by virtue of its very nature, breaks up and destroys. It is of importance to inquire whether man can strengthen and intensify that which he can, it seems, so easily ruin if he will. Does his power lie only in the direction of destruction? Has he no means of invigorating and repairing a tie, in itself so precious, yet in some respects so frail? The answer lies in our Lord's promise. Prayer is the act by which man, conscious at once of his weakness and his immortality, puts himself into real and effective communication with the Almighty, the Eternal, the Self-existent God. I say, effective communication. For prayer, as our Lord teaches in the text and elsewhere, is not without results. God answers prayer in many ways. His answer to the soul's petition for health and strength are collectively described as grace—grace being the invisible influence whereby He on His part strengthens and quickens the tie which binds the petitioner to Himself. "Ask, and it shall be given you."

Prayer, then, braces the bond of religion from the side of man ; and grace, God's highest answer to prayer, braces it in a different and far more powerful sense on the part of God.

It is not too much to say that the practice of prayer is co-extensive with the idea of religion. Wherever man has believed a Higher Power to exist, he has not merely discussed the possibility of entering into converse with such a power, he has assumed, as a matter of course, that he can do so. Upon desert plains and wild promontories not less than in crowded thoroughfares, and gorgeous temples, priesthoods, and kings, and multitudes have taken prayer for granted, as being the most practical as well as the most interesting and solemn concern of life. The surface of the earth, of parts of our own island, is still covered with the reliques of some among these ancient worshippers. And if the implied conceptions of the deity were degraded, and the rites cruel, or inhuman, or impure, and the minds of the worshippers not seldom imbruted by the very acts which should have raised them heavenward ; still the idea of worship as the natural correlative of belief in the superhuman was always there. To know that a Higher Being existed, and interested Himself, in whatever way, in the destinies of man, was to feel that it was at once a right and a duty to approach Him. And as we pass the historical lines within which, as Christians believe, mankind has enjoyed successive revelations of His true Self and His true Will, we find that prayer is the prominent feature, the characteristic

exercise, of man's highest life. Sacrifice begins at the very gates of Eden (Gen. iv. 4).

The life of early Patriarchs is described as "a walking with God," a continuous reference in thought and aspiration to the Father above, Who yet was so near them. And after the Mosaic law had been given, when the idea and range of sin had been deepened and extended in the mind of Israel, we find prayer organized in a system of sacrifices, suited to various wants and moods of the human soul, consciously dealing with God as the King, both of the sacred nation and the individual conscience. Penitence, thanksgiving, intercession, adoration, each found an appropriate expression. Later still, in the Psalter, prayer—the purest, the loftiest, the most passionate—took shape in imperishable forms; and when at length a new revelation was made in Jesus Christ, there was little to add to what was already believed as to the power and obligation of prayer, beyond revealing the secret of its acceptance. Our Lord's precepts and example are sufficiently emphatic; and His Apostles appear to represent prayer, not so much as a practice of the Christian life, as its very breath and instinctive movement. The Christian must be "continuing instant in prayer;" he must "pray without ceasing."

Each faculty, or endowment, or form of activity that belongs to man has, over and above a number of more indirect effects, its appropriate and characteristic action, in which its whole strength is embarked, and in which it has, so to speak, its full play and impetus. To this

is no exception. While its influence upon human life is strong and various in proportion to its high aim and object; while it is felt, when it wields real empire, in every department of human activity and interest, as an invigorating, purifying, chastening, restraining, guiding influence, it too has a work peculiarly its own. In this work it is wont, if we may so speak, to embark its collective forces, and to become peculiarly conscious of its direction and intensity. This work is prayer. Prayer is emphatically religion in action. It is the soul of man engaging in that particular germ of activity which presupposes the existence of a great bond between itself and God. Prayer is therefore nothing else or less than the noblest kind of human exertion. It is the one department of action in which man realizes the highest privilege and capacity of his being. And in doing this, he is himself enriched and ennobled almost indefinitely. Now, as of old, when he comes down from the mountain, his face bears tokens of an irradiation which is not of this world. . . .

It was a saying of the late Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury, that "no man was likely to do much good at prayer who did not begin by looking upon it in the light of a work, to be prepared for and persevered in with all the earnestness which we bring to bear upon subjects which are, in our opinion, at once most interesting and most necessary."

This indeed will appear, if, looking to an act of real prayer, we take it to pieces. Of what does it consist?

It consists always of three separate forms of activity, which, in the case of different persons, co-exist in very varying degrees of intensity, but which are found in some degree in all who pray, whenever they pray.

To pray, is first of all to put the understanding in motion, and to direct it to the Highest Object to Which it can possibly address itself, the Infinite God. In our private prayers, as well as in our public liturgies, we generally preface the petition itself by naming one or more of His Attributes. "Almighty and Everlasting God!" If the understanding is really at work at all, how overwhelming are the ideas, the truths, which pass thus before it! A boundless Power, an Existence Which knows neither beginning nor end. Then the substance of the petition, the motives which are alleged for urging it, the issues which depend upon its being granted or being refused, present themselves to the eye of the understanding. . . .

Next, to pray, is to put the affections in motion; it is to open the heart. The Object of prayer is the Uncreated Love, the Eternal Beauty; He of Whose beauty all that moves love and admiration here is at best a pale reflection. To be in His Presence in prayer is to be conscious of an expansion of the heart, and of the pleasure which accompanies it, which we feel in another sense, when speaking with an intimate or loved friend or relative. And this movement of the affections is sustained throughout the act of prayer. It is invigorated by the spiritual sight of God, but it is also the original impulse which

leads us to draw near to Him. In true prayer, as in teaching, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Once more, to pray is to put the will in motion, just as decidedly as we do when we sit down to read hard, or to walk up a steep hill against time. That sovereign power in the soul, which we name the will, does not merely, in prayer, impel us to make our first necessary mental effort, but enters most necessarily and vitally into the very action of prayer itself. It is the will which presses the petition; it is the will which struggles with the reluctance of sloth or with the opposition of sinful passion; it is the will which perseveres; it is the will which exclaims, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." The amount of will which we severally carry into the act of prayer is the ratio of its sincerity; and where prayer is at once real and prolonged, the demands which it makes upon our power of concentrating determination into a specific and continuous act are very considerable indeed.

Now, these three ingredients of prayer are also ingredients of all real work, whether of the brains or of the hands. The sustained efforts of the intelligence and of the will must be seconded in work no less than in prayer by a movement of the affections, if work is to be really successful. A man must love his work to do it well. The difference between prayer and ordinary work is that in prayer the three ingredients are more equally balanced. Study may in time become intellectual habit,

which scarcely demands any effort of will; handiwork may in time become so mechanical as to require little or no guidance from thought: each may exist in a considerable, although not in the highest degree of excellence, without any co-operation of the affections. Not so prayer. It is always the joint act of the will and the understanding, impelled by the affections, and when either will or intelligence is wanting, prayer at once ceases to be itself, by degenerating into a barren intellectual exercise, or into a mechanical and unspiritual routine.

The dignity of prayer as real work becomes clear to us if we reflect on the faculties which it employs. This will be made clearer still if we consider the effect of all sincere prayer upon the habitual atmosphere of the soul. Prayer places the soul face to face with facts of the first order of solemnity and importance; with its real self, and with its God. And just as art, or study, or labour in any department is elevating when it takes us out of and beyond the petty range of daily and perhaps material interest, while it yet quickens interest in them by kindling higher enthusiasms into life, so in a peculiar and transcendent sense it is with prayer. Prayer is man's inmost movement towards a Higher Power: but what is the intellectual view or apprehension of himself that originally impels him to move? Under what aspect does man appear to himself in prayer? It is the mystery which lies enclosed within each one of us—the mystery which is yet a fact—of an undying personality. It is that which each human speaker describes as "I." It is that

of which each of us is conscious as no one else can be conscious. Its existence is not proved to us by a demonstration, since we apprehend it as immediately obvious. Its certainty can be shaken by no sophistical or destructive argument, since our conviction of its reality is based upon a continuous act of primary conception. No sooner do we withdraw ourselves from the importunities of sense, from the wanderings of imagination, from the misleading phrases which confuse the mental sight, than we find ourselves face to face with this fact, represented by "I." For it is neither the body which the real self may ignore, nor a passionate impulse which the real self may conquer, nor even that understanding which, close as it is to the real self, is yet distinct from it. The body may be in its decrepitude; the flames of passion may have died away; the understanding may be almost in its dotage: yet the inward, self-possessed, self-governing being may remain untouched, realizing itself in struggling against the instincts of bodily weakness, and in crushing out some embers which survive the fires of extinct passions. Now it is this self, conscious of its greatness, conscious of its weakness, which is the real agent in prayer. In its oppressive sense of solitude, even in the midst of multitudes, this self longs to go forth and to commune with the Father of spirits Who gave it life. This real self it is which apprehends God with the understanding, which embraces Him with the affections, which resolves through the will to obey Him; and thus does it

underlie and unite the complex elements of prayer, so that in true heartfelt prayer we become so conscious of its vitality and power. It is in prayer especially that we cease to live, as it were, in a single faculty, or on the surface of our being ; it is in prayer that we cease to regard ourselves as animal forms, or as social powers, or as family characters, and look hard, for the time being, at ourselves, as being what we really are ; that is to say, as immortal spirits, outwardly draped in social forms and proprieties, and linked to a body of flesh and blood, but in our conscious spiritual solitude looking steadily upwards at the Face of God, and straining our eyes onwards towards the great Eternity which lies before us.

Prayer, then, is so noble, because it is the work of man as man ; of man realizing his being and destiny with a vividness which is necessary to him in no other occupation. But what shall we say of it, when we reflect further that in prayer man holds converse with God ; that the Being of beings, with all His majestic Attributes, filling and transcending the created universe, traversing human history, traversing each man's own individual history, is before him ; that although man is dust and ashes, he is, by prayer, already welcomed in the very courts of Heaven ? It is not necessary to dwell upon this topic. Whatever be the daily occupation of any in this Church—be he a worker with the hands or a worker with the brain, be he gentle or simple, be he unlettered or educated, be he high in the State or among the millions at its base, is it not certain that the nobleness

of his highest forms of labour must fall infinitely below that of any single human spirit entering consciously into converse with the Infinite and Eternal God? . . . There is no question here as to the subjective effect of prayer ; the effect which it confessedly has upon the mind and character of the person who prays. Such effects have been admitted on the part of those who unhappily do not pray themselves. That all the effects of Christian prayer upon the soul, or most of them, are natural, a Christian cannot admit ; he believes them to be chiefly due to the transforming power of the Grace of God, given, as at other times, so especially in answer to prayer. But that *some* effects of prayer upon the soul are natural consequences of directing the mind and the affections towards a superhuman object, whether real or ideal, may be fully granted. Thus it has been observed that persons without natural ability have, through the earnestness of their devotional habits, acquired in time powers of sustained thought, and an accuracy and delicacy of intellectual touch ; which would not else have belonged to them. The intellect being the instrument by which the soul handles religious truth, a real interest in religious truth will often of itself furnish an educational discipline ; it alone educates an intellect which would otherwise be uneducated. The moral effects of devotion are naturally more striking and attendant. Habitual prayer constantly confers decision on the wavering, and energy on the listless, and calmness on the excitable, and disinterestedness on the

selfish. It braces the moral nature by transporting it into a clear invigorating unearthly atmosphere ; it builds up the moral life, insensibly but surely remedying its deficiencies, and strengthening its weak points, till there emerges a comparatively symmetrical and consistent whole, the excellence of which all must admit, though its secret is known only to those who know it by experience. Akin to the moral are the social effects of prayer. Prayer makes men as members of society different, in their whole bearing, from those who do not pray. It gilds social intercourse and conduct with a tenderness, an unobtrusiveness, a sincerity, a frankness, an evenness of temper, a cheerfulness, a collectiveness, a constant consideration for others, united to a simple loyalty to truth and duty, which leavens and strengthens society. Nay, it is not too much to say that prayer has even physical results. The countenance of a Fra Angelico reflects his spirit no less than does his art ; the bright eye, the pure elevated expression, speak for themselves. It was said of one who has died within the present generation (Rev. J. Keble), that in his latter years his face was like that of an illuminated clock ; the colour and gilding had long faded away from the hands and figures, but the ravages of time were more than compensated for by the light which shone from within. That was what might have been expected in an aged man of great piety ; to have lived in spirit on Mount Tabor during the years of a long life is to have caught in its closing hours some rays of the glory of the Transfiguration.

In the larger sense of the word, as the spiritual language of the soul, prayer is intercourse with God, often seeking no end beyond the pleasure of such intercourse. It is praise ; it is congratulation ; it is adoration of the Infinite Majesty ; it is a colloquy in which the soul engages with the All-Wise and the All-Holy ; it is a basking in the sunshine, varied by ejaculations of thankfulness to the Sun of Righteousness for His light and His warmth. In this larger sense, the earlier part of the *Te Deum* is prayer as much as the latter part ; the earliest and latest clauses of the *Gloria in Excelsis* as truly as those between them ; the *Sanctus* and the *Jubilate* no less than the *Litany* ; the *Magnificat* as certainly as the fifty-first Psalm. When we seek the company of our friends we do not seek it simply with the view of getting something from them : it is a pleasure to be with them ; to be talking to them at all, or about anything ; to be in possession of their sympathies and to be showing our delight at it ; to be assuring them of their place in our hearts and thought. So it is with the soul, in dealing with the Friend of friends—with God. Prayer is a great deal more than petition, which is only one department of it ; it is nothing less than the whole spiritual action of the soul turned towards God as its true and adequate Object. . . .

The great masters and teachers of Christian doctrine have always found in prayer their highest source of illumination. Not to go beyond the limits of the English Church, it is recorded of Bishop Andrews that he spent five hours daily on his knees. The greatest practical

resolves that have enriched and beautified human life in Christian times have been arrived at in prayer, ever since the day when, at the most solemn service of the Apostolical Church, the Holy Ghost said, "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts xiii. 2). It is prayer which prevents religion from degenerating into mere speculative thought, on the one side, or into mere philanthropy on the other. In prayer the man of action will never become so absorbed in his work as to be indifferent to the truth, which is its original motive. In prayer, the man of study and contemplation will never forget that truth is given, not so much that it may interest and stimulate our understandings, as that it may govern and regenerate our life. And thus it is that prayer is of such vital importance to the well-being of the soul. Study may be dispensed with by those who work with their hands for God; handiwork may be dispensed with by those who seek Him in books and thought. But prayer is indispensable, alike for workers and students, alike for scholar and peasant, alike for the educated and the unlettered. For we all have to seek God's Face above; we all have souls to be sanctified and saved; we all have sins and passions to beat back and to conquer. And these things are achieved pre-eminently by prayer, which is properly and representatively the action of religion. It is the action whereby we men, in all our frailty and defilement, associate ourselves with our Divine Advocate on high, and realize the sublime bond which in Him, the One Mediator between

God and man, unites us in our utter unworthiness to the strong and All-Holy God.

That prayer, sooner or later, is answered to all who have prayed earnestly and constantly, is, in different degrees, a matter of personal experience. David, Elijah, Hezekiah, Daniel, the Apostles of Christ, were not the victims of an illusion, in virtue of which they connected particular events which would have happened in any case with prayers that preceded it. They who never pray, or who never pray with the humility, confidence, and importunity that win a way to the Heart of God, cannot speak from experience as to the effects of prayer; nor are they in a position to give credit, with wise and generous simplicity, to those who can. But, at least, on such a subject as this, the voice of the whole company of God's servants may be held to counterbalance a few *à priori* surmises or doctrines. It is the very heart of humanity itself which from age to age mounts up with the Psalmist to the Eternal Throne—"O Thou That hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come" (Psa. lxxv. 2). And Christians can penetrate within the veil. They know that there is a majestic pleading, which for eighteen centuries has never ceased, and which is itself omnipotent—the pleading of One Who makes their cause His own; they rest upon the Divine words, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you" (St. John xv. 23).

A time will probably come to most of us, if it has not come to some already, when we shall wish that the hours at our command, during the short day of life, had not been

disposed of as they have. After all, this life is a poor thing to live for, when the next is in view. Whatever be their claims, created beings have no business to be sitting on that highest throne within the soul that belongs to the Creator. Yet, for all that, too often they do sit there. And time is passing. Of that priceless gift of time, how much will one day be seen to have been lost! how ruinous shall we deem our investment of this our most precious stock! How many interests, occupations, engagements, friendships—I speak not of the avowed ways of “killing time,” as it is termed with piteous accuracy—will be then regarded only as so many precautions for building our house upon the sand: as only so many expedients for assuring our failure to compass the true end of our existence! It may not now seem possible that we should ever think thus. Life is like the summer’s day; and in the first fresh morning we do not realize the noonday heat, and at noon we do not think of the shadows lengthening across the plain, and of the setting sun, and of the advancing night. Yet, to each and all, the sunset comes at last; and those who have made most of the day are not unlikely to reflect most bitterly how little they have made of it. Whatever else they may look back upon with thankfulness or with sorrow, it is certain that they will regret no omissions of duty more keenly than neglect of prayer; that they will prize no hours more than those which have been passed, whether in private or in public, before that Throne of Justice and of Grace upon which they hope to gaze throughout eternity.

The Subject of Religion—the Soul

“What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?”—PSALM viii. 4.

REVELATION has familiarized Christians with the angels, as supramundane beings, in a very high degree capable of religion. But religion, as it comes before us on the surface of this planet, is a monopoly of man. Among the lower creatures we find nothing like it, we can discover no place for it. Man is the highest being of which these creatures have cognizance. Often, indeed, may we discover in their attachment to ourselves, in their fidelity, in their tenderness, in the true delicacy of the attention which they show us, much that rebukes us when we reflect on the poor service that we ourselves pay to a Higher Master. But having no unseen world open to them, and being, as they are, incapable of any properly reflective thought, they are also incapable of religion, of any consciously personal relationship to the Source of all Life. But man can look above and beyond this world of sense; he can enter into real communion with the Monarch of both worlds; and the secret of his doing this lies in that which, by virtue of God's bountiful gift and appointment, he himself is as distinct from the creatures around him.

What is man? What, let us ask, is this or that given man of our acquaintance, a near relation, one of ourselves? In the distance, or at first sight, a single human being is what the world chiefly associates with him. He is so much property, so much professional skill, so much political influence, so much social power, so much literary reputation, so much practical capacity for public affairs. Upon these things the public eye is wont to rest chiefly, if not exclusively; these things are labelled with this or that great name when it is repeated in conversation or in the newspapers. They are only the accidents of any human life; they are external to it: they tell us nothing about it—nothing, at least, that a true appreciation of human greatness would most care to know. When do we see the man himself? We stand face to face with him, we listen to a voice, we note the peculiarities of a manner, we study the ever-varying lines of a human countenance, but we are still outside the real man. His voice, his manner, his expression may tell us something about him, it may be a great deal; but they are not himself. We get nearer his real self when we can observe and compare and take to pieces what he says and does: in his speech and his action he reveals at least some portion of his character. But that which speaks and acts is beneath speech and action; it is always and necessarily invisible. The knife of no anatomist, however delicately wielded, can detect it in the folds of any human brain. No psychologist can draw it out into the light by an exhaustive analysis of any human thought.

Underlying all the outward decorations of man's life ; underlying the human face and form, and speech, and action, although thrilling through them as if threatening ever and anon to become visible ; underlying all that is most private and subtle even in secret thought, is that around which all else is gathered, and without which all else would be stripped of its significance, without which it would never have been or would cease to be.

What is man ? He is, in the root and seat of his being, a person. He is that which each of us means when he says " I." Let us turn to look at this question from within, rather than from without ; for, after all, it is within ourselves that we can, each for himself, only and really grapple with it. What do we mean, each of us, by " I " ? We mean, first of all, something distinct, utterly, profoundly distinct, from all that is not " I ;" something which is conscious, as nothing else is conscious, of this deep distinctness. I think, and I know that it is only I who think ; I think about myself, and I know that it is myself only upon whom I only am thinking ; no other self commingles with this consciousness, or I should not be myself. I am thus conscious of my own identity, and of my radical separateness from all besides. Nay, more, I can trace and assert this identity of myself with myself, this separateness of myself from all that is not myself, for a long term of past years. When the outward circumstances of my life were far other than they are now ; when my bodily mien was so different that none could recognize in it the myself of to-day ; when the inner

companions of my secret being were not as they have been since, so that I had other thoughts, other feelings, other resolves than now; yet still, underlying these differences, there was, deep down at bottom, the same self, thinking, feeling, resolving then, even as it resolves, and feels, and thinks now. And of no one fact am I more certain, or so certain, as of this;—that this self of the present is the self of thirty or forty years ago; that it was then as it is now, that it is now as it was then, a thing distinct from all else in the universe; and a thing, among creatures, of which I alone have actual cognizance. And as I am certain that it is separate from all besides, and that, as long as my memory will serve me, it has never been otherwise; so I feel at this moment as I always have felt, that I possess it; that its thoughts are *my* thoughts, that its will is *my* will; that this thought and will are not powers which come in upon me like a flood and possess me, but that they are strictly forms of my own activity. If I think, I choose to think; if I will, it is I, and no other being in the universe who does will; my will is the exercise of a freedom, unshared by any partner of my life, and, if I choose, indestructible. Such, or, at least, something of this kind, is the sense of personality, as we, each one of us, experience it. As long as we can remember, it has been at the bottom of all that we have felt, thought, and done; it has penetrated every movement of our minds and hearts; it has welded the many elements of our lives, outward and inward, moral and intellectual, spiritual and

even bodily, into a consistent whole. When it is felt, our inmost being is felt; we can get no deeper than that reflective thought, than that conscious will. Here we touch, so far as we can touch, that personal spirit; and it is because man is a personal spirit, or, as Scripture terms it, a being made in the image of God, that he is master of the world around him. The mere animal is not thus conscious of, and capable of reflecting on, his own existence. He lives and feels; he carries instinct forward, it may be, to the very confines of reason. But he does not comprehend his life; he does not reflect that it is he who lives; he is not conscious of remembering a line of personal existence, unshared by any other being, and threading a series of years and a long track of divergent circumstances. He does not anticipate a future. Neither is he free or deliberate in his exercise of will; his will is only impulsive desire or passion, unregulated by intelligence: it is not his instrument; it is his master. Being thus the slave of nature around him, and of his own nature, of his own instincts, and of the force of circumstance, he never can project himself beyond nature, and so rise above it, and take the measure of it and of his own relation towards it. He is thus passive when face to face with his nature, he is thus entirely under its control, because he altogether belongs to it; because in him there is nothing which comes from a higher world, and is independent of the world of sense. Accordingly the single animal is only a specimen of his kind, the individual exists only in the

species ; but man, besides belonging on his animal side to an animal species, yet knows himself to be, in his individual capacity, a solitary essence, personal and indivisible. With man, the animal species, the lower nature which he shares with his kind, is subordinate to the individual ; because in man that which constitutes the individual, his inmost being, belongs to a separate and a higher order of existence.

This consciousness of personal life is not to be referred to anything in man's physical constitution. Thought is not merely phosphorus, and psychology is not correctly described as a branch of physiology. . . . Whatever Holy Scripture may explicitly say about the spiritual personality of man as a formal doctrine, it implies much more by its constant appeal to man's higher nature. From first to last it treats man as a being who, although clothed in an animal form, is essentially and in himself a spirit. It surrounds him with precepts which a self-determining spirit only can obey ; with examples, of which only a reflecting spirit can enter into the force and drift ; with prayers, aspirations, modes of thought and feeling, that have no meaning for a being who is not experimentally conscious of his spiritual subsistence. Especially is this observable in those Divine pages which form the inmost sanctuary of Holy Scripture ; in the Life and Words of our Lord Jesus Christ. As human forms pass before Him, in the Gospel, although He is constantly relieving human want and pain, it is plain that the outward man means for

Him, relatively, almost nothing, and that His eye rests persistently, exclusively, upon the man within. As we accompany Him upon that brief but exhaustive study of humanity, we feel before the centurion or Pilate little or nothing of the majesty of the Roman name. Although Christ appeared when the Empire of the Cæsars was in its splendour, He speaks of "the Kings of the Gentiles," in a phrase of studied vagueness; as if to suggest the utter insignificance of the highest political interests which only touch man's outward life, when they are contrasted with those higher interests of the human spirit which He had come to promote. Even the greatness and authority of the successors of Aaron disappears, or recedes into the background, in the atmosphere of this exacting estimate, which knows no respect of persons; while on the other hand, at His bidding, a few obscure and illiterate Galilean peasants became respectively a St. Peter, a St. John, a St. Mary Magdalen—names which of themselves recall neither political weight nor intellectual prestige, but types of spiritual character, beautiful and majestic, upon which already eighteen centuries of progressive civilization have been forward to lavish all the best of their reverence and love. . . .

The belief that the inmost being of each one of us is created as immediately by God as was that of our first parent Adam, brings each of us into a felt relationship with God, and reminds us of our obligations towards Him, more effectively than would be the case if we

supposed ourselves to receive spiritual as well as corporeal life through a long series of ancestors. It is this persuasion which underlies Bishop Andrew's favourite ejaculatory prayer from the Psalter, "Despise not Thou the work of Thine own hands." It is not in the anatomy and faculties of the body, but in the analysis and structure of the soul, that the greatness of human life is best realized, and our indebtedness towards its Giver most deeply felt. This reflective reason; this heart, capable of a boundless expansion; this will, which may be trained to a freedom and intensity of extraordinary power;—of what are these faculties so suggestive as of the knowledge, love, and service due to that Being of Beings Who is the end, as He is the Author, of this centre of complex or self-controlling life?

Man, then, is a spirit, and as it would seem, he is, as such, immediately created by God. The gravest question yet remains: What is his destiny? Whatever may be said of the importance of questions bearing on the soul's origin, no reflecting man will deny the interest of all that bears upon the future. The question of the eternal future is too pressing to be left at a distance, permanently. If religion has many enemies in the predominant tendencies of the modern world, she certainly has steady and inalienable allies in the permanent circumstances of human nature. To the most refined and cultured of ourselves death is just as certain a contingency as it was to our rudest forefathers, and its dread solem-

nities enter just as penetratingly into the homes of rank and science, as into the humblest cottages in the land. Sooner or later it comes close to all of us, and the mists which hide its stern realities from our eyes roll away, and leave us face to face with them.

“They think that their houses shall continue for ever : and that their dwelling-places shall endure from one generation to another ; and call the lands after their own names.

“Nevertheless, man will not abide in honour : seeing that he may be compared with the beasts that perish ; this is the way of them.

“ Be not thou afraid, though one be made rich : or if the glory of his house be increased ;

“For he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth : neither shall his pomp follow him.

“For while he lived, he counted himself an happy man : and so long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee.

“He shall follow the generation of his fathers : and shall never see light.

“Man being in honour hath no understanding : but is compared unto the beasts that perish” (Psa. xlix. 11, 12, 16-20).


This is the solemn irony of life, and from year to year we find ourselves face to face with it. Death does not move us much, when it visits those whom we do not know, or whom we know only slightly ; when it only meets us as it travels gloomily through the

crowded thoroughfare towards the distant cemetery, or as it catches our eye in the supplement of our daily newspaper. It does not touch us as being what it is, so long as it only produces social changes which excite our interest, while it keeps sufficiently at a distance not to wound our hearts. We drape it in phrases which treat it as a solemn abstraction. No doubt it is solemn, but so is the war lately raging in Paraguay, or a Russian campaign in Central Asia. We should speak very differently of a revolutionary struggle in the streets of London, upon the issue of which it was clearly understood that our own life and property might immediately depend. But we find that at last death comes home to us, even to us, in all the closeness of its dreadful embrace. Not, it may be, this time to ourselves—that were perhaps more bearable. The one human being whom we have loved best on earth—the parent, the husband, the wife, the child, lies before us. We see what is coming. It is very gradual, perhaps, and there are many rallies in which vital power struggles with disease, in which hope flickers up in its contest with the presentiments of reason, only to die back into a deeper despair. It is very gradual—a slow processional movement to the grave, but the end comes at last. At last a day comes to which the preceding days are as if they had not been; a day comes which lives in memory. We can no longer reckon on hours; we dare not be away even for a few minutes, lest we should be too late. A change has taken place, which they know well who are familiar with death, and of which

none can mistake the import. We feel, all feel, that the time is short, and a few words are said into which is compressed a life—its most sincere thought and love,—a few assurances, messages, entreaties; no more is possible. It lies before us, that loved form; only an hour ago it spoke: we speak to it now, but in vain. We bend over it in our agony, as if it was still what it had been, but we know—what would we not give to escape from our conviction?—that neither thought nor feeling tenants it now. And the question must rise then, if it never rose before, with an urgency proportioned to the grief which asks it, Is all really over? Has the real being, which one short hour ago thought and felt so keenly, actually and for ever ceased to be? . . .

It is no fancy which insists that Eternal Justice cannot close His account with any human conscience at the moment of death; that there must be an after-world in which the too unequal balance of suffering and happiness, of good and evil doing during life will be surely rectified. We must do stern violence to the best and deepest instincts of our better nature before the voice of this argument can be silenced.

The distinctive teaching of the New Testament about the future world everywhere presupposes the soul's immortality. If death were annihilation for all of us, or for all but the just, the descriptions of the end of the world, of the last judgment, of the general resurrection, and of the future state, would have no interest for any but a minority of mankind. It is the steady conviction



that, in some way, we shall each and all personally subsist after death, that secures to these pages of our Bibles such universal interest.

This conviction of our immortality rests on what is for Christians an unquestioned certainty. In Christian eyes, the central fact of the world's annals is the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. It occurred in the full daylight of history ; it was attested by hundreds of witnesses. We can only deny its truth upon *à priori* principles, which are not merely destructive of serious belief that God is a Moral and even a Living Being, but which are also fatal to confidence in human history. The Resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of our own. The clouds which hung around the gate of death in earlier ages have rolled away since the day of our Saviour's triumph over death ; the presumptive speculations which were previously rife as to the future state have been exchanged for strong certainties. " Life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel." " God has begotten us again to a lovely hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Death has lost its sting, and the Grave its victory.

Here, too, let it be noted that, although the soul is the seat of man's personal life, it is not man in his completeness. Man is a body as well as a soul. It is common, but erroneous, to speak of man's body as related to his spirit only as is the casket to the jewel which it contains, or only as a prisoner to the walls of his dungeon. As a matter of fact, the personal spirit of man strikes its

roots far and deep into the encompassing frame of sense, with which, from the first moment of its existence, it has been so intimately associated : in a thousand ways, and most powerfully, the body acts on the soul, and the soul on the body. They are only parted at death by a violent wrench. The spirit can indeed exist independently of the body, but this independent existence is not its emancipation from a prison-house of matter and sense ; it is a temporary and abnormal divorce from the companion whose presence is needed to complete its life. Would the soul, permanently severed from the body, still be, properly speaking, man ? Would it not really be some other being ? The body which has been so long the associate and partner of the soul's life, the instrument of its will, the minister of its passions, mingling lower physical sensations with that higher life of thought and feeling which belongs to it, could not be altogether cast away without impairing the completeness of our being, without imperilling the continuous identity of our changeful existence.

This, then, is the true ground of the general resurrection, which is no eccentric or gratuitous miracle, but the restoration to man of that completeness of identity which is impaired by death. . . . As a matter of fact, all men are to rise again with their bodies, and to give account of their own works ; the complex being which acted here, is to be judged hereafter.

The body and soul together share here in one composite being ; each acts upon the other as well as

with it. The corruptible body presseth down the soul. The passions which have their seat in the soul depict themselves upon the surface of the body. On the one hand, the apostle reminds us that fleshly lusts war, not merely against the bodily health, but against the soul. On the other hand, a beautiful soul illuminates the face of a St. Stephen with angelic light; and hereafter the bodies of the blessed will be “glorious,” that is to say, translucent with the splendours of the glorified spirit.

SOME ELEMENTS OF RELIGION, Crown 8vo, page 81.

God, the Object of Religion

“My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God.”—PSALM xlii. 2.

THERE is scarcely, even in the Psalter, a more touching psalm than this. The Psalmist is probably an exile of the earliest Assyrian period. In the land of his captivity, he is surrounded by all the institutions of an established idolatry, and, as he sadly reflects, he is far removed from the Holy Home of the race of Israel; from the place which the Lord had chosen to put His name there; from the worship and fellowship of the sacred commonwealth. His thought spans the intervening desert, and he dwells with a full and aching heart on all that lies beyond it. He remembers the festival services in Jerusalem in bygone years, when he went with the “multitude keeping holyday,” when he, too, had his share in the “voice of joy and praise.” As He calls up in memory this cherished past, He pours out His soul in secret grief; and while the cruel heathen around taunt him with the insulting question, Where is thy God? he can only find refuge in tears—his tears, as he tells us, flow by day and

by night. When will the long years of exile have an end? When will he come to "appear before the presence of God?" He is like the thirsty stag panting after the distant water brooks. His inmost being is "athirst for God, yea, even for the living God."

"The living God!" What a strange, yet what a frequent phrase! Surely, the Author of Life must live; yet here is an idea which hints at the idea of deities which are not alive. It was thus that the Hebrews distinguished the true God Who has revealed Himself to their ancestors from the false gods of the nations around them. "As for all the gods of the heathen, they are but idols; but it is the Lord that made the heavens." The heathen deities were so much carving, sculpture, and colouring; or they were so much human imagination or human speculation; they had no being independent of the toil, whether of the hands or of the brains of men. They had no existence in themselves; they did not live, whether men thought about them or not; as we should say, they had no objective existence. It was true that evil spirits, by lurking beneath the idol forms, or draping themselves in the debasing fancies of the heathen world, might continue to appropriate the homage which the human heart in its darkness lavished upon its own creations; and thus the Canaanites are said, in their cruel Moloch worship, to have sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils. But the broad contrast, latent in the expression "the living God," is the contrast between imagination and fact; between an Existing Being and a collection of

fancied personages ; between a solemn truth and a debasing and stupid unreality.

We are not here concerned to inquire what elements of truth there may have been in the forms of heathen worship with which the Jews came into contact. Some truth there certainly was in the most degraded of them ; since a religion which is pure undiluted falsehood could not continue to exist as a religion, and the false religions which do exist, only exist by virtue of the elements of truth which in varying proportions they severally contain. The lowest fetichism witnesses to the great truth that man must go out of himself in order to seek for an adequate object of his heart-felt devotion—of his highest enthusiasms. And no instructed Christian would deny that certain forms of heathenism embrace incidentally the recognition of considerable districts of fundamental truth. If indeed, as St. Paul says, God teaches all men up to a certain point through nature and conscience (Rom. i. 19), it could not be otherwise ; and this intermixture of truth, which is thus latent in all heathenism, yields the best starting-point for convincing heathens of the errors which they admit, and of the truths which they deny beyond. In this sense, undoubtedly, the science which has been of late named Comparative Theology, may be made really serviceable to the interests of Christian truth. It is a widely different thing to start with an assumption that all the positive religions in the world, the Jewish and Christian revelations included, are alike conglomerate formations in very varying degrees, partly true and partly


false, and that the religion of the future—an etherealized abstraction, to be distilled by science from all the creeds and worships of mankind—will be something beyond and distinct from all of them. Certainly heathenism is not treated, either in the Old Testament or in the New, with the tenderness which would befit such an anticipation as this. Practically speaking, and as contrasted with the revealed truth, whether Jewish or Christian, heathenism is represented as a lie. To live within its territorial range is to live in the kingdom of darkness; to practise its rites is to be an enemy to God by wicked works; to go after false gods is to have the earnest of great trouble, and to provoke the anger of the real Lord of the Universe. The Assyrian idols did not raise in the exile's mind any question as to the stray elements of truth which might be underlying so much tawdry and impure error. "My soul," he cried, "is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God."

The language of this exile is in truth the language of the human heart under the stress of the purest and deepest desire that man can know. In this life man is an exile; he is parted from his true home and country; he is the victim of an unconquerable restlessness. This restlessness of the mind, this "wasting fever of the heart" of man, this unwillingness to be satisfied with any earthly good, attracted the attention of ancient thinkers. But they did not understand its secret. They would fain have accounted for it, by pointing to some fatal warp or flaw

in human nature ; or they would have silenced it by the tentative guesses of successive philosophies, moving in cycles which ended in proclaiming that nothing beyond the province of sense is trustworthy ; or they would have buried it beneath the cares of business, or the cares of empire, or the grosser attractions of sensual pleasure. But again and again the human heart has protested against these endeavours to crush out the noblest of its aspirations ; and history again and again has echoed with the cry, " My soul is athirst," not for pleasures which may degrade, nor yet for philosophies which may disappoint, but for the Pure, the Absolute, the Everlasting Being. " My soul is athirst for God : when shall I come to appear before the presence of God ? "

Against Materialism, in all its forms, the common sense of man, not to speak of his religious instinct, will ever protest. The idea or presentiment of God, everywhere rooted in the mind of man, is a fact sufficiently important to be treated as something better than a superstition by those who put forward any serious doctrine about human nature. A mental fact is as worthy of attention as any fact which can be appraised in a chemical laboratory or on the roof of an observatory. Cicero's statement that there is no nation so barbarous and wild as not to have believed in some divinity, is still, notwithstanding certain apparent exceptions, true. A nation of pure Atheists is yet to be discovered. Unworthy and degraded as are many of the beliefs on the subject of a Higher Power that are to be found in the

heathen world, some groping after the Great Unseen, some tentative intuition, some shadowy belief there is to be found always and everywhere. Man thinks of a Higher Power as naturally as he thinks of the world around him, or of himself. Nay, he thinks of Truth ; and truth is no mere abstraction ; it is a Real Being ; it is God. " He thinks of the Infinite," says Fenelon. " As he thinks of the circle, of the line, as the distinction between whole and part. The spontaneous activity of his consciousness brings with it, contains in itself, the thought of One who is greater, if not also stronger, wiser, better than all else. This instinctive perception and affirmation of God is indeed not merely an act of the intellect ; it is also, perhaps it is chiefly, an act of the moral sense, an act of the conscience. It is that upward attraction of the soul upon which Plato dilates ; it is the universal hypothesis which Aristotle registers ; it is the world-wide prejudice of Epicurus ; it is the ' anticipation,' naturally imbedded in the human mind of Cicero. It precedes demonstration ; it is out of the reach of criticism ; it resists hostile argument. It is, speaking philosophically, a fact in psychological science, and a fact so fruitful and stimulating, that to it must be traced all in human life and effort that looks really upward—man's love of truth, his clinging to a coming life, his aspirations to rise above the level of animal existence. It is, speaking religiously, in its way, a revelation ; it is a revelation of God within, as S. Paul says, answering to the revelation to God from without ;



it sets man's thoughts in motion as he gazes upon the natural world, and bids him not to rest until he has wrung from it a disclosure of the highest truth which it has to teach him.

And thus, with this preparatory idea or intuition of a Divinity, the human mind approaches what are called the proofs of God's existence. Looking out upon the universe around it, the mind seeks for its productive cause. Whatever efforts may have been made by recent writers to reduce causation to mere antecedence, the law of causation is at once a primary law of human thought and of the world without us. What cause, what force, preceded and brought into existence this universe? All the causes with which we come in contact here, are, as we term, them, second causes; but they point to a cause beyond themselves, to a cause of causes, to a Supreme All-producing Cause, Itself uncaused, unoriginated. The heavenly bodies move on unceasingly in their orbits, obedient to the laws of gravitation, but no law of gravitation could have assigned their place in space. The whole universe bids us look beyond itself for the adequate explanation of its existence. "So far is it from being true," says Lord Bacon, "that the explanation of phenomena by natural causes leads us away from God and His Providence, that those philosophers who have passed their lives in discovering such causes can find nothing that affords a final explanation without having recourse to God and His Providence." The father of the inductive philosophy does but speak the common

sense of religion ; but will it be maintained, except by writers who are prepared to deny the existence of causation, that he does not also utter the common sense of scientific thought ?

Does the universe tell us anything as to the nature of its First Cause? Surely we may at least presume that the Author of the natural world must be higher and greater than anything in the natural world. Water will not rise above its source, and it is inconceivable that if there be an Author of nature at all, His self-existent Life must not be higher and nobler than any life which He has bestowed. Who does not see the force of the Psalmist's argument, "He That made the ear, shall He not hear? and He that gave the eye, shall He not see?" (Psa. xciv. 9.) Above the life of the tree, there is that of the animal ; above that of the animal, there is the life of man. Man, with all his ingenuity and will, cannot produce a leaf or a shell-fish : and is it to be supposed that the Author of man's life is less endowed with thought and volition than man? There are chasms in the natural world which no theories substituting a fated self-development for the free action of God will really bridge over. There is the chasm between the inorganic and the organic ; the chasm between the lifeless and that which lives ; the chasm between animal instinct and the reflective consciousness. At each of these levels of creation we seem to feel more sensibly than elsewhere the fresh intervention of a creating Intelligence ; and our conviction of His activity is strengthened when we

observe the interdependence and harmony of the universe as a whole, in which each part is necessary, in which nothing is really out of place, and between the several elements nothing of which new relations are continually coming to light, as if to justify His foresight, and to enhance our estimate of His inexhaustible resources. "Those persons," says Montesquieu, "who maintain that a blind fate has produced all the effects we see in the world, maintain that which is a great absurdity; for what absurdity can be greater than a blind fate producing intelligent beings?" "How do you know," a Bedouin was asked, "that there is a God?" "In the same way," he replied, "that I know, on looking at the sand, when a man or a beast has crossed the desert—by His foot-prints in the world around me."

Thus does the common sense or reason of man lead him up to recognizing One Supreme Intelligence as at least the Original Cause of all that he is and sees around him. . . .

The substance of the Christian revelation of God consists not merely in the teaching of Jesus Christ, together with the old Hebrew literature on which He sets His seal, and the apostolical doctrine which He warrants by anticipation and also in His Life: His Life was the unveiling of God to the eye of man's sense, that the eye of man's spirit might understand Him. Christ's Life, not less than His teaching, confirms the highest instincts of the human conscience, and educates them up to a point which of themselves they could never have reached. . . .

Traceable everywhere in human history, traceable especially in the history of one separated and chosen race, the interest of the Perfect Moral Being in the moral and thinking creatures of His Hand culminates at Bethlehem and on Calvary. The Incarnation of the Eternal Son, the manifestation of the Divine life of Love and Justice, and Compassion, and Purity, flashing through a veil of flesh, and leading up to a death of agony and shame, which alters the whole existing moral relation between earth and heaven ; this is the glorious creed which rivets a Christian's conviction of the moral intensity of the Life of God. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." What could He do more in order to convince us that He is not merely a Force or an Intelligence, but a Heart? At the feet of Him Who could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," we understand, and feed upon the certainty, that God is moral as well as intellectual "light, and that in Him is no darkness at all." When a man's hold upon this creed is gone, his thought falls back at best upon the mere rudimentary and less adequate idea of the Godhead ; the darker mysteries of the world's history present themselves with more painful force ; and the mind tends inevitably, in the last resort, either to Deism or to Pantheism. . . .

In conclusion : God being really alive, His existence is a fact with which no other fact that the human mind can come to recognize will possibly compare. Nothing among created things that can engage and stimulate thought,

nothing that can warm and expand affection, nothing that can invigorate will and purpose, ought, in the judgment of any thinking human being, to compete with the Eternal God. Our reasonable duty towards God is "to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to love Him, with all the heart, with all the mind, with all the soul, and with all the strength." And yet that unbegun, unending, self-existing Life ; that boundless Intelligence, administering a boundless Power ; that long array of moral attributes which win our love whilst they must also move our reverence and fear ;—what is He, our God, to us? Do we thirst for God? As the days and months and years pass, do we ever look out of and beyond ourselves, upon that vast ocean of Uncreated Life Which encircles us, Which penetrates our most inmost selves? Do we ever think steadily, so as to dwell with a real intellectual interest upon Him Who is the first and highest of Truths, to Whose free bounty we ourselves owe the gift of existence, and to Whom we must one day account for our use of it? Do we ever sincerely desire to love Him and to live for Him? Or are we constantly hurrying along our solitary path, from one vanishing shape towards another, while we neglect the Alone Unchangeable? Be sure that, if we will, in God revealed in Christ the soul may slake the thirst of the ages ; and the dreariest, and darkest, and most restless existence, may find illumination and peace. "This God is our God for ever and ever : He will be our Guide unto death, and beyond it." To each one of us, now, He is, if we will ;—if we will, He will be for ever,

to each, the Eternal Truth, wherein thought can never find its limit; the Uncreated Beauty, "Most Ancient, yet always Fair," whereof affection can never tire; the Perfect Rule, existing eternally in the Life of the Necessary Moral Being, whereunto each created will may perpetually confirm itself, yet never exhaust its task. Without this Awful and Blessed Being, man has no adequate object, even during these days of his brief earthly existence; his thought, his affection, his purpose spring up and are exercised only that they may presently waste and die. With God, the human soul not merely interprets the secret of the universe; it comprehends, and is at peace with, itself. In God is the satisfaction of its thirst,—He is the Object of religion.

SOME ELEMENTS OF RELIGION, Crown 8vo, p. 39.

God and the Soul

"O God, Thou art my God."—PSALM lxxiii. i.

AMONG the many truths which the Supreme Being has disclosed to us men about Himself, there are two which, beyond others, are peculiarly calculated to enable us to realize our real relation towards Him. The first, the truth that God is our Creator ; the second, the truth that He has made us for Himself, and is Himself the end and the explanation of our existence.

The most simple and obvious truths are, as a rule, the most profound ; and no apology is needed to ask each one of you to reflect steadily on the answer to this question, Where was I one short century ago ? Most of us, indeed, in putting to ourselves such a question, might name a much shorter period. The sun in the heavens, the face of the earth, the general conditions of human life were then what they are at this hour. The civilized world with its great cities, and its leading ideas, and its general current of effort and movement, were then what they are now. England was here. Our neighbourhood, our family, it may be our home, were known. These very benches were filled by a generation which observed our

Church formalities, and used our devotional language. Others, it may be, were then living who bore the very names which distinguish us among men, and whose forms and faces might have almost seemed to antedate our own personal life. But we, each one of us, were as yet nothing. All the thought, and feeling, and passion, and effort, which centres at this moment in, and is part of, our separate selves, did not then exist. The lowest and vilest creatures were more than we; in that to them a being had been given, while as yet we were without one.

But at this moment we are in possession of that blessed and awful gift which we name "life." We find ourselves endowed with an understanding capable of knowledge, and with a heart formed for love. Our nature is active as well as affectionate and intelligent; it possesses high capacities for service; it is endued with a power of shaping means to ends, and with an hereditary empire over the beings which live around us. But how comes it that we do thus exist, and under such conditions? . . . Each of us is a separate produce of the mystery of creation. After the Being of God Himself, creation is perhaps the greatest, as it is in time the first, of mysteries; it is, it must be ever, the master-difficulty for the mind of man. That innovation on what had already been for an eternity, that new companionship of dependent beings thus welcomed by the Solitary, Self-sufficing, Ever-blessed God, is a marvel which may well prepare the soul even for belief in the Divine Incarnation. . . . Belief in creation is an integral part

of belief in God ; and He who made the universe made each one of us. "Thine hands have made me and fashioned me." . . . "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect ; and in Thy book were all my members written, which day by day were fashioned when as yet there were none of them" (Psa. cxix. 73).

But there is a wide interval between admitting the dogma of the creation in the abstract, and realizing sharply and accurately that all and each of the faculties of our own souls and bodies have been created. You may read in the face of many a man whom you meet in the street that he has never faced the truth that he is a created thing, and that One Being exists to Whom he owes literally all that he has and is. The warning of the Psalmist, that it is God Who hath made us and not we ourselves, is not superfluous. . . . We speak, and think, and form judgments, as if we were the authors of our own existence ; not as believing ourselves seriously to be so, but simply because we shrink from facing all that is involved in the alternative, namely, that we are products of the creative love and will of our God.

Certainly God did not need any one of us ; we were not indispensable to His happiness or His glory. He can have foreseen nothing in such as we are which forced Him to create us. Why did He then draw us out of that abyss of nothing ? Why did He give us this existence which He has denied to so many possible beings, able so much better to herald His glory and to do justice to His love ? Why did He place us at the

summit of the visible creation rather than at its base? Why did He make us men instead of brutes, or trees, or stones? Why did He give us a soul made in His image, and a complex nature which everywhere bears the lively imprint of His attributes? The answer is to be found in a revelation which was made, in the early years of his ministry, to the disappointed prophet of the falling kingdom of Judah, and upon which he fell back as the shadows of approaching ruin darkened around him. "I have loved thee," God had said of old to Israel, "with an everlasting love." And St. Paul teaches that the Father hath chosen us Christians in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. It was His infinite love which, when God was self-sufficing and all-blessed in His solitary eternity, poured around Himself the countless forms of created life. And to this self-same love alone we individually owe our existence. While as yet we were not, and while on earth men knew as little of us as we know of those who will take our places in this church a century hence, we each of us had a home and a recognition in the Thought and Heart of God. His purpose to give us life was, like Himself, eternal. And now that we live He preserves our life from moment to moment. He is, as the Psalmist says, the Strong God of each one of us. He sustains our life as a complex whole; He upholds each one of its constitutive powers and faculties, so truly and so unceasingly, that did He for one moment withdraw His

hand our being must dissolve and fade away into that nothingness out of which He has taken it. . . .

But this involves an admission with the most direct bearing upon life and conduct. As the Creator, God must have *rights* over the creature. These rights are more imperious and urgent than those of a sovereign over his subjects, or of a parent over his children, or of an artist over his work. As the apostle's question reminds the factious teacher at Corinth, we have literally nothing which we have not received (1 Cor. iv. 7). We simply belong to God. We are His property in a more absolute sense than can be implied by any illustration drawn from human life. We can retire into no depth or centre of thought and being where we do not meet Him, or where we can meet Him on equal terms. Such indeed are God's rights over us, that He Himself cannot waive them. He need not have created us, but having created us, He must needs claim us as His property. He cannot authorize us to live for any but Himself. Nothing can happen to suspend His claim. Men have no claims upon us but those which He has given them. We originally belong to God, and all human rights over us must be strictly subordinated to, as flowing from, His ownership and His supremacy. As all that we are comes from Him, so we belong to Him without exception or reserve. The senses of our bodies, the powers of our souls, the successive ages of life, thought, feeling, resolve, all are His. He is the undisputed Master of our health, of our fortune, of our very life; and against Him we

have neither plea nor remedy. . . . Human rights perish at death. But God's claims, which begin in time, continue in eternity: the grave does not touch them. Escape Him we cannot. We must live under a dispensation of His love or a dispensation of His justice. We can nowhere be independent of Him. We may now and here choose between a free and joyous service, and a punishment which is as certain and as enduring as the being which He has given us. These rights of God over His creatures, thus resistless, thus absolute, thus supreme, are confessed by the Church alike on earth and in heaven. "O come let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker" (Psa. xcv. 6). "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. iv. 11).

UNIVERSITY SERMONS, First Series, p. 9.

St. Paul's Account of Faith

"For we walk by faith, not by sight."—2 COR. v. 7.

EVERY reader of the New Testament associates St. Paul with a special advocacy of the necessity of faith as the indispensable condition of man's justification before God. What is this "faith" of St. Paul's? It is in experience the most simple of the movements of the soul, and yet, if analyzed, it turns out to be one of the most complex ideas of the New Testament. Religious confidence is closely allied to belief; that is to say, to a persuasion that some unseen fact is true. And this belief, having for its object the unseen, is opposed by St. Paul to sight (2 Cor. v. 7). It is fed by, or rather it is in itself, a higher intuition than any of which nature is capable; it is the continuous exercise of a new sense of spiritual truth with which man has been endowed by grace. It is indeed a spiritual second-sight; and yet reason has ancillary duties towards it. Reason may prepare the way of faith in the soul, by removing intellectual objects to its claims; or she may arrange, digest, explain, systematize, and so express the intuitions of faith in accordance with the needs of a particular locality or time. . . . Faith itself,

by which the soul lives, is mainly passive, at least in respect of intellectual ingredients : the believing soul may or may not apprehend with scientific accuracy that which its faith receives. . . . But without "faith" itself, "it is impossible to please God," and in its simplest forms, faith presupposes a proclamation of its object by the agency of preaching. When the soul in very truth responds to the message of God the complete responsive act of faith is threefold. This act produces simultaneously from the intelligence, from the heart, and from the will of the believer. His intelligence recognizes the unseen object as a fact. His heart embraces the object thus present to the understanding ; his heart opens instinctively and unhesitatingly to receive a ray of heavenly light. And his will too resigns itself to the truth before it : it places the soul at the disposal of the object which thus rivets its eye and conquers its affections. The believer accordingly merges his personal existence in that of the object of his faith ; he lives, yet not he, but Another lives in him (Gal. iii. 20) ; he gazes on truth, he loves it, he yields himself to it, he loses himself in it. So true is it, that in its essence, and not merely in its consequences, faith has a profoundly moral character. Faith is not merely a perception of the understanding ; it is a kindling of the heart, and a resolve of the will,—it is, in short, an act of the whole soul, which, by one simultaneous complex movement, sees, feels, and obeys the truth presented to it.

According to St. Paul, it is Jesus Christ Who is

eminently the Object of Christian faith. The intelligence, the heart, the will of the Christian unite to embrace Him. How versatile and many-sided a process this believing apprehension of Christ is, might appear from the constantly varied phrase of the apostle when describing it. Yet of faith in all its aspects Christ is the legitimate and constant Object. Does St. Paul speak as if faith were a movement of the soul towards an end? That end is Christ. Does he hint that faith is a repose of the soul resting upon a support which guarantees its safety? That support is Christ. Does he seem to imply that by faith the Christian has entered into an atmosphere which encircles, and protects, and fosters the growth of his spiritual life? That atmosphere is Christ. Thus the expression, "the faith of Christ" denotes the closest possible union between Christ and the faith which apprehends Him. And this union, effected on man's side by faith, on God's by the instrumentality of the sacraments (Tit. iii. 5; 1 Cor. x. 16), secures man's real justification. The believer is justified by this identification with Christ, Whose perfect obedience and expiatory sacrifice are thus transferred to him. St. Paul speaks of belief in Christ as involving belief in the Christian creed (1 Tim. iii. 16). Christ has warranted the ventures which faith makes, by assuring the believer that He has guaranteed the truth of the whole object-matter of faith (2 Tim. i. 12.). Faith, then, is the starting-point and the strength of the new life, and this faith must be pre-eminently faith in Christ (Gal. ii. 16). The precious Blood of Christ, not

only as representing the obedience of His Will, but as inseparably joined to His Majestic Person, is itself an object in which faith finds life and nutriment ; the baptized Christian is bathed in it, and his soul dwells on its pardoning and cleansing power. It is Christ's Blood ; and Christ is the Great Object of Christian faith. For not Christ's teaching alone, not even His redemptive work alone, but, emphatically and beyond all else, the Person of the Divine Redeemer is set forth by St. Paul before the eyes of Christians, as being That upon Which their souls are more especially to gaze in an ecstasy of chastened and obedient love.

Now, if our Lord had been, in the belief of His Apostle, only a created being, is it conceivable that He should have been thus put forward as having a right well-nigh to engross the vision, the love, the energy of the human soul? For St. Paul does expressly, as well as by implication, assert that the hope (1 Tim. i. 2 ; 1 Cor. xv. 19 ; Col. i. 27) and the love of the soul (1 Cor. xvi. 22), no less than its belief, are to centre in Christ. He never tells us that a bare intellectual realization of Christ's existence or of Christ's work will avail to justify the sinner before God. By faith the soul is to be moving ever towards Christ, resting ever upon Christ, living ever in Christ. Christ is to be the end, the support, the very atmosphere of its life. But how is such a relation possible if Christ be not God? Undoubtedly faith does apprehend and perceive the existence of invisible creatures as well as the Invisible

God; certainly the angels are discerned by faith; the Evil One himself is an object of faith. That is to say, the supernatural sense of the soul perceives these inhabitants of the unseen world in their different spheres of wretchedness and bliss. But angels and devils are not objects of the faith which saves humanity from sin and death. The blessed spirits command not that loyalty of heart and will which welcomes Christ to the Christian soul. The soul loves them as His ministers, not as its end. No creature can be the legitimate satisfaction of a spiritual activity so complex in its elements, and so self-absorbing in its range, as is the faith which justifies. No created form can thus be gazed at, loved, obeyed in that inmost sanctuary of a soul which is consecrated to the exclusive glory of the Great Creator. . . .

Again, how much is implied as to the Person of Christ by the idea of Regeneration, as it is brought before us in the writings of St. Paul! St. Paul uses the word itself only once (Tit. iii. 5); but the idea recurs continually throughout his writings; it is not less prominent in them than is the idea of faith. This idea of regeneration is sometimes expressed by the idea of a change of vesture (Col. iii. 9, 10). The regenerate nature has put off the old man, with his deeds of untruthfulness and lust, and has put on the new or ideal man, the Perfect Moral Being, the Christ. Sometimes the idea of regeneration is expressed more closely by the image of a change of form (Rom. xii. 2). The regenerate man has been metamorphosed. He is made to correspond to the Form of Christ; he is renewed

in the Image of Christ ; his moral being is reconstructed. Sometimes however, and most emphatically, regeneration is paralleled with natural birth : the regenerate man is a new creature (Gal. vi. 15), he is a work of God (Eph. ii. 10), he has been created according to a Divine standard (Eph. iv. 24). But—and this is of capital importance—he is also said to be created in Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 10). Christ is the sphere of the new creation. The instrument of regeneration on Christ's part, according to St. Paul, is the sacrament of baptism (Tit. iii. 5), to which the Holy Spirit gives its efficacy, and which, in the case of an adult recipient, must be welcomed to the soul by repentance and faith. Regeneration thus implies a double process, the one destructive, and the other constructive ; by it the old life is killed, and the new life forthwith bursts into existence. This double process is effected by the sacramental incorporation of the baptized first with Christ crucified and dead (Rom. vi. 3, 4), and then with Christ rising from the dead to life ; although the language of the Apostle distinctly intimates that a continued share in the resurrection-life depends upon the co-operation of the will of the Christian (Rom. vi. 4, 5). But the moral realities of the Christian life, to which the grace of baptism originally introduces the Christian, correspond with, and are effects of, Christ's Death and Resurrection. Regarded historically, these events belong to the irrevocable past. But for us Christians the Crucifixion and the Resurrection are not merely past events of history ; they are energizing facts from which no lapse of centuries can sever us, they

are perpetuated to the end of time within the kingdom of the Redemption. The Christian is, to the end of time, crucified with Christ; he dies with Christ; he is buried with Christ; he is quickened together with Christ; he rises with Christ; he lives with Christ. He is not merely made to sit together in heavenly places as being in Christ Jesus, he is a member of His Body, as out of His flesh, and out of His bones. Hooker says, "We are of Him, and in Him, even as though our very flesh and bones should be made continue with His (Eph. v. 30). And of this profound incorporation baptism is the original instrument. The very form of the sacrament of regeneration, as it was administered to the adult multitudes who in the early days of the Church pressed for admittance into her communion, harmonizes with the spiritual results which it effects. As the neophyte is plunged beneath the waters, so the old nature is slain and buried with Christ. As Christ, crucified and entombed, rises with resistless might from the grave which can no longer hold Him, so, to the eye of faith, the Christian is raised from the bath of regeneration radiant with a new and supernatural life. His gaze is to be fixed henceforth on Christ, Who, being raised from the dead, dieth no more. The Christian, indeed, may fail to persevere; he may fall from this high grace in which he stands. But he need not do so; and meanwhile he is bound to account himself as "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 10, 11).

Sermon on the Mount not a Dead Letter

“He opened His mouth, and taught them.”—ST. MATT. v. 2.

IT is not uncommon in our day to be informed that “the Sermon on the Mount is a dead letter in Christendom.” In consequence (so men speak) of the engrossing interest which Christians have wrongly attached to the discussion of dogmatic questions, that original draught of essential Christianity, the Sermon on the Mount, has been well-nigh altogether lost sight of. Perhaps you yourselves, my brethren, ere now have repeated some of the current commonplaces on this topic. But have you endeavoured to ascertain whether it is indeed as you say? You remark that you at least have not met with Christians who seemed to be making any sincere efforts to turn the Sermon on the Mount into practice. It may be so. But the question is, where have you looked for them? Do you expect to meet them rushing hurriedly along the great highways of life, with the keen, eager, self-asserting multitude? Do you expect that with their eye upon the Beatitudes and upon the Cross, they will throng the roads which lead to worldly success, to earthly wealth, to temporal honour? Be assured that those who know where moral beauty, aye,

the highest, is to be found, are not disappointed, even at this hour, in their search for it. Until you have looked more carefully, more anxiously than has probably been the case, for the triumphs of our Lord's work in Christian souls, you may do well to take upon trust the testimony of others. You may at least be sufficiently generous, aye, and sufficiently reasonable, to believe in the existence at this present time of the very highest types of Christian virtue. It is a simple matter of fact that, in our day, multitudes of men and women do lead the life of the Beatitudes ; they pray, they fast, they do alms to their Father Which seeth in secret. These are Christians who take no thought for the morrow. These are Christians whose righteousness does exceed that worldly and conventional standard of religion, which knows no law save the corrupt public opinion of the hour, and which inherits in every generation the essential spirit of the Scribes and Pharisees. These are Christians who show forth the moral creativeness of Jesus Christ in their own deeds and words ; they are living witnesses to His solitary and supreme power of changing the human heart. They were naturally proud ; He has enabled them to be sincerely humble. They were, by the inherited taint of of their nature, impure ; He has in them shed honour upon the highest forms of chastity. They too were, as in his natural state man ever is, suspicious of and hostile to their fellow-men, unless connected with them by blood, or by country, or by interest. But Jesus Christ has taught them the tenderest and most practical forms of love for

man viewed simply as man ; He has inspired them with the only true, that is, the Christian, humanitarianism. Think not that the moral energy of the Christian life was confined to the Church of the first centuries. At this moment, there are millions of souls in the world, that are pure, humble, and loving. But for Jesus Christ our Lord these millions would have been proud, sensual, selfish. At this very day, and even in atmospheres where the taint of scepticism dulls the brightness of Christian thought and enfeebles the strength of Christian resolution, there are to be found men whose intelligence gazes on Jesus with a faith so clear and strong, whose affection clings to Him with so trustful and so warm an embrace, whose resolution has been so disciplined and braced to serve Him by a persevering obedience, that, beyond a doubt, they would joyfully die for Him, if by shedding their blood they could better express their devotion to His Person, or lead others to know and to love Him more. Blessed be God, that portion of His one Fold in which He has placed us, the Church of England, has not lacked the lustre of such lives as these. Such assuredly was Ken ; such was Bishop Wilson ; such have been many whose names have never appeared in the page of history. Has not one (Keble) indeed quite lately passed from among us, the boast and glory of this our University, great as a poet, greater still, it may be, as a scholar and a theologian, greatest of all as a Christian saint ? Certainly to know him, even slightly, was inevitably to know that he led a life distinct from, and higher than, that of common

men. To know him well, was to revere and to love in him the manifested beauty of his Lord's presence ; it was to trace the sensibly perpetuated power of the Life, of the Teaching, of the Cross of Jesus.

On the other hand, look at certain palpable effects of our Lord's work which lie on the very face of human society. If society, apart from the Church, is more kindly and humane than in heathen times, this is due to the work of Christ on the hearts of men. The era of "humanity" is the era of the Incarnation. The sense of human brotherhood, the acknowledgment of the sacredness of human rights, the recognition of that particular stock of rights, which appertains to every human being, is a creation of Christian dogma. It has radiated from the heart of the Christian Church into the society of the outer world. Christianity is the power which first gradually softened slavery, and is now finally abolishing it. Christianity has proclaimed the dignity of poverty, and has insisted upon the claims of the poor, with a success proportioned to the sincerity which has welcomed her doctrines among the different peoples of Christendom. The hospital is an invention of Christian philanthropy ; the active charity of the Church of the fourth century forced into the Greek language a word for which paganism had had no occasion. The degradation of woman in the pagan world has been exchanged for a position of special privilege and honour, accorded to her by the Christian nations. The sensualism which pagans mistook for love has been placed under the

ban of all true Christian feeling : and, in Christendom, love is now the purest of moral impulses ; it is the tenderest, the noblest, the most refined of the movements of the soul. The old, the universal, the natural feeling of bitter hostility between races, nations, and classes of men is denounced by Christianity. The spread of Christian truth inevitably breaks down the ferocities of national prejudice, and prepares the world for that cosmopolitanism which, we are told, is its most probable future. International law had no real existence until the nations, taught by Christ, had begun to feel the bond of brotherhood. International law is now each year becoming more and more powerful in regulating the affairs of the civilized world. And if we are sorrowfully reminded that the prophecy of a world-wide peace within the limits of Christ's kingdom has not yet been realized ; if Christian lands, in our day as before, are reddened by streams of Christian blood ; yet the utter disdain of the plea of right, the high-handed and barbarous savagery, which marked the wars of heathendom, have given way to sentiments in which justice can at least obtain a hearing, and which compassion and generosity, drawing their inspirations from the Cross, have at times raised to the level of chivalry.

But neither would any improvements in man's social life, nor even the regenerate lives of individual Christians, of themselves, have realized our Lord's "plan" in its completeness. His design was to found a society or Church ; individual sanctity and social amelioration are only effects radiating from the Church. The Church

herself is the true proof of His success. After the lapse of eighteen centuries the kingdom of Christ is here, and it is still expanding. How fares it generally with a human undertaking when exposed to the action of a long period of time? The idea which was its very soul is thrown into the shade by some other idea ; or it is warped, or distorted, or diverted from its true direction, or changed by some radical corruption. In the end it dies out from among the living thoughts of men, and takes its place in the tomb of so much forgotten speculation, on the shelves of a library. Within a short lifetime we may follow many a popular moral impulse from its cradle to its grave. From the era of its young enthusiasm, we mark its gradual entry upon the stage of fixed habit ; from this again we pass to its day of lifeless formalism, and to the rapid progress of its decline. But the society founded by Jesus Christ is here, still animated by its original idea, still carried forward by the moral impulse which sustained it in its infancy. If Christian doctrine has, in particular branches of the Church, been overlaid by an incrustation of foreign and earthly elements, its body and substance is untouched in each great division of the Catholic Society ; and much of it, we rejoice to know, is retained by communities external to the Holy Fold. If intimate union with the worldly power of the State (as especially in England during the last century) has sometimes seemed to chill the warmth of Christian love, and to substitute a heartless externalism for the spiritual life of a Christian brotherhood ; yet again and again the flame

of that Spirit Whom the Son of Man sent to "glorify" Himself, has burst up from the depths of the living heart of the Church, and has kindled among a generation of sceptics or sensualists a pure and keen enthusiasm which confessors and martyrs might have recognized as their own. The Church of Christ in sooth carries within herself the secret forces which renew her moral vigour, and which will, in God's good time, visibly reassert her essential unity. Her perpetuated existence among ourselves at this hour bears a witness to the superhuman powers of her Founder, not less significant than that afforded by the intensity of the individual Christian life, or by the territorial range of the Christian empire.

THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD, p. 130.

The Nicene Creed

"I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church."

CERTAINLY if toil and suffering confer a value on the object which they earn or preserve; if a country prizes the liberties which were baptized in the blood of her citizens; if a man rejoices in the honour which he has kept unstained at the risk of life; then we, who are the heirs of the ages of Christendom, should cling with a peculiar loyalty and love to the great Nicene confession of our Lord's Divinity. For the Nicene definition was wrung from the heart of the agonized Church by a denial of the truth on which was fed, then as now, her inmost life. In the Arian heresy the old enemies of the Gospel converged as for a final and desperate effort to achieve its destruction. The carnal, gross, external, Judaising spirit, embodied in the frigid literalism of the school of Antioch; the Alexandrian dialectics, substituting philosophical *placita* for truths of faith; nay, Paganism itself, vanquished in the open field, but anxious to take the life of its conqueror by private assassination;—these were the forces which reappeared in Arianism. It was no mere exasperation of rhetoric which saw Porphyry in Arius,

and which compared Constantius to Diocletian. The life of Athanasius after the Nicene Council might well have been lived before the Edict of Milan. Arianism was a political force; it ruled at court. Arianism was a philosophical disputant, and was at home in the schools. Arianism was, moreover, a proselytizer; it had verses and epigrammatic arguments for the masses of the people; and St. Gregory of Nyssa, in a passage which is classical, has described its extraordinary success among the lower orders. Never was a heresy stronger, more versatile, more endowed with all the apparatus of controversy, more sure, as it might have seemed, of the future of the world. It was a long, desperate struggle, by which the original faith of Christ conquered this fierce and hardy antagonist. At this day the Creed of Nicæa is the living proof of the Church's victory; and as we confess it we should, methinks, feel somewhat of the fire of our spiritual ancestors, some measure of that fresh glow of thankfulness which is due to God after a great deliverance, although wrought out in a distant age. To unbelief this creed may be only an ecclesiastical "test," only an additional "incubus" weighing down "honest religious thought." But to the children of faith, the Nicene confession must ever furnish the welcome expression of their most cherished conviction. Let us henceforth repeat it, at those most solemn moments when the Church puts it into our mouths, with a renewed and deepened sense of gratitude and joy. Not as if it were the mere trophy of a controversial victory, or the dry embodiment of an

abstract truth in the language of speculation, should we welcome this glorious creed to our hearts and lips. Rather let us greet it, as the intellectual sentinel which guards the shrine of faith in our inmost souls from the profanation of error; as the good angel who warns us that since the Incarnation we move in the very ante-chamber of a Divine Presence; as a mother's voice reminding us of that tribute of heartfelt love and adoration which is due from all serious Christians to the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour and our God.

THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD, p. 446.

Kingdom of Heaven

"Thy kingdom come."—ST. LUKE xi. 2.

JESUS proclaimed Himself the Founder of a world-wide and imperishable Society. He did not propose to act powerfully upon the convictions and the characters of individual men, and then to leave them, when they believed and felt alike, the liberty of voluntarily forming themselves into an association, with a view to reciprocal sympathy and united action. From the first, the formation of a society was not less an essential feature of Christ's plan, than was His redemptive action upon single souls. This society was not to be a school of thinkers, nor a self-associated company of enterprising fellow-workers: it was to be a Kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, or, as it is also called, the kingdom of God. For ages, indeed, the Jewish theocracy had been a kingdom of God upon earth. God was the one true King of ancient Israel. He was felt to be present in Israel as a Monarch living among His subjects. The temple was His palace; its sacrifices and ritual were the public acknowledgment of His present but invisible Majesty. But the Jewish polity, considered as a system,

was an external rather than an internal kingdom of God. Doubtless there were great saints in ancient Israel; doubtless Israel had prayers and hymns such as may be found in the Psalter, than which nothing more searching and more spiritual has been since produced in Christendom. Looking, however, to the popular working of the Jewish theocratic system, and to what is implied as to its character in Jeremiah's prophecy of a profoundly spiritual kingdom which was to succeed it, may we not conclude that the Royalty of God was represented rather to the senses than to the heart and intelligence of at least the mass of His ancient subjects? Jesus Christ our Lord announced a new kingdom of God; and by terming it *the* Kingdom of God, He implied that it would first fully deserve that sacred name, as corresponding with Daniel's prophecy of a fifth empire. Let us moreover note, in passing, that when using the word "kingdom," our Lord did not announce a republic. Writers who carry into their interpretation of the Gospels ideas which have been gained from a study of the Platonic dialogues or of the recent history of France, may permit themselves to describe our Lord as Founder of the Christian republic. And certainly St. Paul, when accommodating himself to political traditions and aspirations which still prevailed largely throughout the Roman world, represents and recommends the Church of Christ as the source and home of the highest moral and mental liberty, by speaking freely of our Christian "citizenship," and of our coming at baptism to the "city" of the living God. Not that

the apostle would press the metaphor to the extent of implying that the new society was to be a spiritual democracy ; since he very earnestly taught that even the inmost thoughts of its members were to be ruled by their Invisible King. This, indeed, had been the claim of the Founder of the kingdom Himself ; He willed to be King, absolutely and without a rival, in the new society ; and the nature and extent of His legislation plainly shows us in what sense He meant to reign.

The original laws of the new kingdom are for the most part set forth by its Founder in His Sermon on the Mount. After a preliminary statement of the distinctive character which was to mark the life and bearing of those who would fully correspond to His Mind and Will, and a further sketch of the nature and depth of the influence which His subjects were to exert upon other men, He proceeds to define the general relation of the new law which He is promulgating to the law that had preceded it. The vital principle of His legislation, namely, that moral obedience shall be enforced, not merely in the performance of or in the abstinence from outward acts, but in the deepest and most secret springs of thoughts and motive, is traced in its application to certain specific prescriptions of the older Law ; while other ancient enactments are modified or set aside by the stricter purity, the genuine simplicity of motive and character, the entire unselfishness, and the superiority to personal prejudices and exclusiveness which the new Lawgiver insisted on. The required life of the new

kingdom is then exhibited in detail ; the duties of almsgiving, of prayer, and of fasting, are successively enforced ; but the rectification of the ruling motive is chiefly insisted on as essential. In performing religious duties, God's Will, and not any conventional standard of human opinion, is to be kept steadily before the eye of the soul. The Legislator insists upon the need of a single, supreme, unrivalled motive in thought and action, unless all is to be lost. The incorruptible treasure must be in heaven ; the body of the moral life will only be full of light if "the eye is single ;" no man can serve two masters. The birds and the flowers suggest the lesson of trust in and devotion to the One Source and End of life ; all will really be well with those who in very deed seek His kingdom and His righteousness. Charity in judgment of other men, circumspection in communicating sacred truth, confidence and constancy in prayer, perfect consideration for the wishes of others, yet also a determination to seek the paths of difficulty and sacrifice, rather than the broad easy ways trodden by the mass of mankind ;—these features will mark the conduct of loyal subjects of the kingdom. They will beware, too, of false prophets ; that is, of the movers of spiritual sedition, of teachers who are false to the truths upon which the kingdom is based and to the temper which is required of its real children. The false prophets will be known by their moral unfruitfulness, rather than by any lack of popularity or success. Finally, obedience to the law of the kingdom is insisted on as the one condition of

safety; obedience,—as distinct from professions of loyalty; obedience,—which will be found to have really based a man's life upon the immovable rock at that solemn moment when all that stands upon the sand must utterly perish.

Such a proclamation of the law of the kingdom as was the Sermon on the Mount, already implied that the kingdom would be at once visible and invisible. On the one hand certain outward duties, such as the use of the Lord's Prayer and fasting, are prescribed; on the other, the new law urgently pushes its claim of jurisdiction far beyond the range of material acts into the invisible world of thought and motive. The visibility of the kingdom lay already in the fact of its being a society of men, and not a society solely made up of incorporeal beings such as the angels. The King never professes that He will be satisfied with a measure of obedience which sloth or timidity might confine to the region of inoperative feelings and convictions; He insists with great emphasis upon the payment of homage to His Invisible Majesty, outwardly, and before the eyes of men. Not to confess Him before men is to break with Him for ever; it is to forfeit His blessing and protection when these would most be needed. The consistent bearing, then, of His loyal subjects will bring the reality of His rule before the sight of men; but, besides this, He provides His realm with a visible government, deriving its authority from Himself, and entitled on this account to deferential and entire obedience on the part

of His subjects. To the first members of this government His commission runs thus—"He that receiveth you, receiveth Me." It is the King Who will Himself reign throughout all history on the thrones of His representatives; it is He Who, in their persons, will be acknowledged or rejected. In this way His empire will have an external and political side; nor is its visibility to be limited to its governmental organization. The form of prayer which the King enjoins on His subjects, and the outward visible actions by which, according to His appointment, membership in His kingdom is to be begun and maintained, make the very life and movement of the new society, up to a certain point, visible. But undoubtedly the real strength of the kingdom, its deepest life, its truest action, are veiled from sight. At bottom it is to be a moral, not a material empire; it is to be a realm not merely of bodies but of souls, of souls instinct with intelligence and love. Its seat of power will be the conscience of mankind. Not "here" or "there" in outward signs of establishment and supremacy, but in the free conformity of the thought and heart of its members to the Will of their Unseen Sovereign, shall its power be most clearly recognized. Not as an oppressive outward code, but as an inward buoyant exhilarating motive, will the King's Law mould the life of His subjects. Thus the kingdom of God will be found to be "within" men; it will be set up, not like an earthly empire by military conquest or by violent revolution, but noiselessly and "not with observation." It will be

maintained by weapons more spiritual than the sword. "If," said the Monarch, "My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, but now is My Kingdom not from hence."

The charge to the twelve Apostles exhibits the outward agency by which the kingdom would be established ; and the discourse in the supper-room unveils yet more fully the secret sources of its strength, and the nature of its influence. But the "plan" of its Founder with reference to its establishment in the world is, perhaps, most fully developed in that series of parables which, from their common object and from their juxtaposition in St. Matthew's Gospel, are commonly termed Parables of the Kingdom.

How various would be the attitudes of the human heart towards the "word of the kingdom," that is, towards the authoritative announcement of its establishment upon the earth, is pointed out in the Parable of the Sower. The seed of truth would fall from His hand throughout all time by the wayside, upon stony places, and among thorns, as well as upon the good ground. It might be antecedently supposed that within the limits of the new kingdom none were to be looked for save the holy and the faithful. But the Parable of the Tares corrects this too idealistic anticipation : the kingdom is to be a field in which until the final harvest the tares must grow side by side with the wheat. The astonishing expansion of the kingdom throughout the world is illustrated by "the grain of mustard seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds, but

when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs." The principle and method of that expansion are to be observed in the action of the "leaven hid in the three measures of meal." A secret, invisible influence, a soul-attracting, soul-subduing enthusiasm for the King and His work, would presently penetrate the dull, dense, dead mass of human society; and its hard heart and stagnant thought would expand, in virtue of this inward impulse, into a new life of light and love. Thus the kingdom is not merely represented as a mighty whole, of which each subject soul is a fractional part. It is exhibited as an attractive influence, acting energetically upon the inner personal life of individuals. It is itself the great intellectual and moral prize of which each truth-seeking soul is in quest, and to obtain which all else may wisely and well be left behind. The kingdom is a treasure hid in a field, that is, in a line of thought and inquiry, or in a particular discipline and mode of life; and the wise man will gladly part with all that he has to buy that field. Or the kingdom is like a merchant-man seeking "goodly pearls;" he sells all his possessions that he may buy the "one pearl of great price." Here it is hinted that entrance into the kingdom is a costly conquest and mastery of truth, of that one absolute and highest Truth, which is contrasted with the lower and relative truths current among men. The preciousness of membership in the kingdom is only to be completely realized by an unreserved submission to the law of sacrifice; the kingdom flashes forth in its full moral beauty before the eye

of the soul, as the merchant-man resigns his all in favour of the one priceless pearl. In these two parables, then, the individual soul is represented as seeking the kingdom ; and it is suggested how tragic in many cases would be the incidents, how excessive the sacrifices, attendant upon "pressing into it." But a last parable is added in which the kingdom is pictured, not as a prize which can be seized by separate souls, but as a vast imperial system, as a world-wide home of all the races of mankind. Like a net thrown into the Galilean lake, so would the kingdom extend its toils around entire tribes and nations of men ; the vast struggling multitude would be drawn nearer and nearer to the eternal shore ; until at last the awful and final separation would take place beneath the eye of Absolute Justice ; the good would be gathered into vessels, but the bad would be cast away.

The proclamation of this kingdom was termed the Gospel, that is, the good news of God. It was good news for mankind, Jewish as well as Pagan, that a society was set up on earth wherein the human soul might rise to the height of its original destiny, might practically understand the blessedness and the awfulness of life, and might hold constant communion, in a free, trustful, joyous, childlike spirit, with the Author and the End of its existence. The ministerial work of our Lord was one long proclamation of this kingdom. He was perpetually defining its outline, or promulgating and codifying its laws, or instituting and explaining the channels of its organic and individual life, or gathering

new subjects into it by His words of wisdom or by His deeds of power, or perfecting and refining the temper and cast of character which was to distinguish them. When at length He had Himself overcome the sharpness of death, He opened this Kingdom of Heaven to all believers on the Day of Pentecost. His ministry had begun with the words, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He left the world, bidding His followers carry forward the frontier of His Kingdom to the utmost limits of the human family, and promising them that His presence within it would be nothing less than co-enduring with time.

THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD, p. 101.

Our Lord's Work in Souls

"Abide in Me, and I in you."—ST. JOHN xv. 4.

THE depth of our Lord's work in the soul of man has ever been more wonderful than its breadth. The moral intensity of the life of a sincere Christian is a more signal illustration of the reality of the reign of Christ, and of the success of His plan, than is the territorial range of the Christian empire. "The king's daughter is all glorious within." Christianity may have conferred a new sanction upon civil and domestic relationships among men; and it certainly infused a new life into the most degraded society that the world has yet seen. Still this was not its primary aim; its primary efforts were directed not to this world, but to the next. Christianity has changed many of the outward aspects of human existence; it has created a new religious language, a new type of worship, a new calendar of time. It has furnished new ideals to art; it has opened nothing less than a new world of literature; it has invested the forms of social intercourse among men with new graces of refinement and mutual consideration. Yet these are but some of the superficial symptoms of its real work. It has achieved these changes in

the outward life of Christian nations, because it has penetrated to the very depths of man's heart and thought, because it has revolutionized his convictions and tamed his will, and then expressed its triumph in the altered social system of that section of the human race which has generally received it. How complete at this moment is the reign of Christ in the soul of a sincere Christian! Christ is not a limited, He is emphatically an absolute Monarch. Yet His rule is welcomed by His subjects with more than that enthusiasm which a free people can feel for its elected magistracy. Every sincere Christian bows to Jesus Christ as to an Intellectual Master. Our Lord is not merely listened to as a Teacher of Truth; He is contemplated as the absolute Truth itself. Accordingly no portion of His teaching is received by true Christians merely as a "view," or as a "tentative system," or as a "theory," which may be entertained, discussed, partially adopted, and partially set aside. Those who deal thus with Him are understood to have broken with Christianity, at least as a practical religion. For a Christian, the words of Christ constitute the highest criterion and rule of truth. All that Christ has authorized is simply accepted, all that He has condemned is simply rejected, with the whole energy of the Christian reason. Christ's Thought is reflected, it is reproduced, in the thought of the true Christian. Christ's authority in the sphere of speculative truth is thankfully acknowledged by the Christian's voluntary and unreserved submission to the slightest known intimations of His Master's judgment.

High above the claims of human teachers, the tremendous self-assertion of Jesus Christ echoes on from age to age, "I am the Truth." And from age to age the Christian mind responds by a life-long endeavour "to bring every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ."

But if Jesus Christ is Lord of the Christian's thought, He is also Lord of the Christian's affections. Beauty it is which provokes love ; and Christ is the highest Moral Beauty. He does not merely rank as an exponent of the purest morality. He is absolute Virtue, embodied in a human life, and vividly, energetically set forth before our eyes in the story of the Gospels. As such, He claims to reign over the inmost affections of men. As such, He secures the first place in the heart of every true Christian. To have taken the measure of His Beauty, and yet not to love Him, is, in a Christian's judgment, to be self-condemned. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." And ruling the affections of the Christian, Christ is also King of the sovereign faculty in the Christianized soul : He is Master of the Christian will. When He has tamed its native stubbornness, He teaches it day by day a more and more pliant accuracy of movement in obedience to Himself. Nay, He is not merely its rule of action, but its very motive power ; each act of devotion and self-sacrifice of which it is capable is but an extension of the energy of Christ's Own Moral life. "Without Me," He says to His servants, "ye can do nothing;" and with St. Paul His servants reply, "I can do all things through Christ Jesus Which strengtheneth me."

This may be expressed in other terms by saying that, both intellectually and morally, Christ is Christianity. Christianity is not related to our Lord, as a philosophy might be to a philosopher—that is, as a moral or intellectual system thrown off from his mind, resting thenceforward on its own merits, and implying no necessary relation towards its author on the part of those who receive it, beyond a certain sympathy with what was at one time a portion of his thought. A philosophy may be thus abstracted altogether from the person of its originator, with entire impunity. Platonic thought would not have been damaged, if Plato had been annihilated; and in our day men are Hegelians or Comtists, without believing that the respective authors of those systems are in existence at this moment, nay rather, in the majority of cases, while deliberately holding that they have ceased to be. The utmost stretch of personal allegiance, on the part of the disciple of a philosophy to its founder, consists, ordinarily speaking, in a sentiment of devotion “to his memory.” But detach Christianity from Christ, and it vanishes before your eyes into intellectual vapour. For it is of the essence of Christianity that, day by day, hour by hour, the Christian should live in conscious, felt, sustained relationship to the Ever-living Author of his creed and of his life. Christianity is non-existent apart from Christ. It is not a mere doctrine bequeathed by Him to a world with which He has ceased to have dealings: it perishes outright when men attempt to abstract it from the Living Person of its Founder. He is felt by His

people to be their Living Lord, really present with them now, and even unto the end of the world. The Christian life springs from and is sustained by the apprehension of Christ present in His Church, present in and with His members, as a "life-giving Spirit." Christ is the quickening Spirit of Christian humanity; He lives in Christians; He thinks in Christians; He acts through Christians and with Christians; He is indissolubly associated with every movement of the Christian's deepest life. "I live," exclaims the apostle, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This felt presence of Christ it is, which gives both its form and its force to the sincere Christian life. That life is a loyal homage of the intellect, of the heart, and of the will, to a Divine King, with Whom will, heart, and intellect are in close and constant communion, and from Whom there flows forth, through the Spirit and the Sacraments, that supply of light, of love, and of resolve, which enriches and ennobles the Christian soul. My brethren, I am not theorizing or describing any merely ideal state of things; I am but putting into words the inner experience of every true Christian among you; I am but exhibiting a set of spiritual circumstances which, as a matter of course, blessed be God! very many Christians do realize, to their present peace, and to their eternal welfare.

Our Lord's Teaching

"I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."—ST. JOHN xiv. 6.

IT is characteristic, then, of what may be termed the second stage of our Lord's public teaching, that He distinctly, repeatedly, energetically preaches Himself. He does not leave men to draw inferences about Himself from the power of His moral teaching, or from the awe-inspiring nature of His miracles. He does not content Himself with teaching primary moral truths concerning God and our duties towards God and towards one another. He does not bequeath to His apostles the task of elaborating a theory respecting the Personal rank of their Master in the scale of being. On the contrary, He Himself persistently asserts the real character of His position relatively to God and man, and of His consequent claims upon the thought and heart of mankind. Whether he employs metaphor, or plain unmetaphorical assertion, His meaning is too clear to be mistaken. He speaks of Himself as the Light of a darkened world, as the Way by which man may ascend to heaven, as the Truth which can really satisfy the cravings of the soul, as the Life which must be imparted to all who would live in very deed, to all who

would really live for ever. Life is resident in Him in virtue of an undefined and eternal communication of it from the Father. He is the Bread of Life. He is the Living Bread that came down from heaven ; believers in Him will feed on Him and will have eternal life. He points to a living water of the Spirit, which He can give, and which will quench the thirst of souls that drink it. All who come before Him He characterizes as having been, by comparison with Himself, the thieves and robbers of mankind. He is Himself the One Good Shepherd of the souls of men ; He knows and He is known of His true sheep. Not only is He the Shepherd, He is the very Door of the sheepfold ; to enter through Him is to be safe. He is the Vine, the Life-tree of regenerate humanity. All that is truly fruitful and lovely in the human family must branch forth from Him ; all spiritual life must wither and die, if it be severed from His. He stands consciously between earth and heaven. He claims to be the one means of a real approach to the Invisible God : no soul of man can come to the Father but through Him. He promises that all prayer offered in His name shall be answered : " If ye ask anything in My name I will do it." He contrasts Himself with a group of His countrymen as follows : " Ye are from beneath, I am from above ; ye are of this world, I am not of this world." He anticipates His Death, and foretells its consequences : " I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself." He claims to be the Lord of the realm of death ; He will Himself wake the

sleeping dead ; all that are in the graves shall hear His voice ; nay, He will raise Himself from the dead. He proclaims, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." He encourages men to trust in Him as they trust in God ; to make Him an object of faith just as they believe in God ; to honour Him as they honour the Father. To love Him is a necessary mark of the children of God : "If God were your Father, ye would have loved Me." It is not possible, He rules, to love God, and yet to hate Himself : "He that hateth Me, hateth My Father also." The proof of a true love to Him lies in doing His bidding : "If ye love Me, keep *My* commandments."

Of this second stage of our Lord's teaching the most representative document is the Discourse in the supper-room. How great is the contrast between that discourse and the Sermon on the Mount ! In the Sermon on the Mount, which deals with questions of human character and of moral obligation, the reference to our Lord's Person is comparatively indirect. It lies, not in explicit statements, but in the authority of His tone, in the attitude which He tacitly assumes towards the teachers of the Jewish people, and towards the ancient Law. In the last discourse it is His Person rather than His teaching which is especially prominent ; His subject in that discourse is Himself. Certainly He preaches Himself in His relationship to His redeemed ; but still He preaches above all and in all, Himself. All radiates from Himself, all converges towards Himself. The sorrows and perplexities of His disciples, the mission and work of the

Paraclete, the mingling predictions of suffering and of glory, are all bound up with the Person of Jesus, as manifested by Himself. In those matchless words all centres so consistently in Jesus, that it might seem that Jesus alone is before us—alone in the greatness of His supramundane glory; alone in bearing His burden of an awful, fathomless sorrow.

THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD, p. 172.

Teaching and Healing

“And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.”—ST. MATT. ix. 35.

“TEACHING and healing.” This, the motto of our Lord’s life, is the motto also of the profession of medicine. It also not merely heals but teaches; it also is, in its way, a prophet, with truths and virtues specially entrusted to it, that it may recommend and propagate them.

I. It is little to say of this great profession in our day, that it is a keeper and teacher of intellectual truth. We all know that it has furnished of late years to literature some of the most enterprising efforts in the way of speculative thought; and the remarkable Address with which this Congress was opened¹ will have informed the public generally, while it vividly reminded the audience which listened to it, of the vast additions that within the last score of years medical science has made to human knowledge, and of the immense perspectives that are opening before it. On these high themes it would be

¹ The International Medical Congress of August, 1881.

impossible to dwell here; but it may be allowable and sufficient to say, that as a permanent teacher of truth, medical science has powers and responsibilities which are all its own.

The physician can point out, with an authority given to few other men, the present operative force of some of the laws of God. The laws of nature, as we call them—its observed uniformities—are not less the laws and will of God than the ten commandments. Nay, that moral law finds its echo and countersign in this physical world. It is justified by the natural catastrophes which follow on its neglect. It is not the clergyman but the physician who can demonstrate the sure connection between unrestrained indulgence and the decay of health and life; who can put his finger upon the real causes which too often fill, not only our hospitals, but our lunatic asylums, with strong young men; or who can illustrate, by instances drawn from experience, the tender foresight of moral provisions, which at first sight may appear tyrannical or capricious. To be able to show this in detail, to give men thus the physical reason for moral truth;—this is a great prophetic power, a vast capacity, which we in this pulpit might well envy in its possessors; it is a grave responsibility for which those who wield it, like other prophets, must one day give account.

The physician can trace, with an authority which is felt to be so real in no other man of science, the true limits of human knowledge. He knows that to-day science is as ignorant as she was two thousand years ago

of what life in its essence is. Of the physical conditions under which life exists, science has very much that is wonderful to say; and, indeed, she has just been telling us that life, viewed on its physical side, is "the sum of the joint action of all parts of the human system, of the higher or vital ones as well as of the lower or inferior; that there is no one seat of life, since every elementary part, every cell, is a seat of life." We listen with sincere respect and interest; but we observe that this only states, in language of beautiful precision, what are the points of contact between life and the animal organism: we still ask what life is in itself, and we hear no answer. No. Just as science pauses before each atom of matter, unable to satisfy herself whether it be infinitely divisible or not, so, when she has exhausted the skill of the anatomist in endeavouring to surprise the life-principle in some secret recesses of the animal frame, she again must pause to confess that the constitutive essence of the life-principle itself is a mystery beyond her ken. And never is science more worthy of her prophetic office than when she dares to make this confession. True science, like prophecy, from Moses downwards, knows not merely what she knows, but the limits of her knowledge; and when she is tempted, if ever, to forget this, as by him who whispered into the ear of the dying Laplace, some praise of her reputation which has seemed to ignore it, she replies, with the great Frenchman, "My friend, pray don't speak thus. That which we know is little enough; that of which we are ignorant is enormous."


The physician is a prophet ; and this character is never so apparent as when life is drawing towards its close. Often when to the sanguine ignorance of friends, the bright eye and the buoyant step seem to forbid serious apprehension, medical science already hears not uncertainly the approaching footsteps of death. There is a point at which all forms of highly cultivated knowledge become instincts ; they are certain of their judgments, even when not able to produce a reason. And no man can have passed middle life without being struck with the sort of second sight, as it may well seem, which is at the command of an accomplished physician. Would that I might be permitted, in the freedom of my ministry, to say a word as to the use of this tremendous power ! Too often, when science knows that death is inevitable, the dying man is allowed to cherish hopes of life, with a view to possibly prolonging for a few more days or hours the struggle for physical existence ; and thus the precious, the irrevocable moments pass, during which the soul, by acts of faith, and hope, and love, and contrition, might unite itself to the Divine Redeemer, and prepare itself for the presence-chamber of the Judge. Brethren, it is not for this that your higher knowledge is given you ; it is not for this that the departed will thank you when you too meet them in the world of spirits.

II. But the medical profession may also be a great teacher of reverence. Whatever else may be said of our age, reverence is not one of its leading characteristics. We have, as we think, explored, examined, appraised all

the sublimities, all the sanctities, all the mysteries that commanded the awe of our less cultivated or less inquisitive forefathers ; and, as a generation, we have ceased to revere. And surely this absence of reverence is a moral loss. What is reverence ? It is the sincere, instinctive acknowledgment of a higher greatness, which attracts and awes the mind that gazes on it. We grow up insensibly towards that which we revere ; and to revere nothing is to fall back upon self as the best standard of attainable excellence, and to be dwarfed and blighted proportionately. Now, the profession of medicine is, or should be, an apostolate of reverence ; for its field of action is the human body ; and in no other school may reverence be learned more surely than here.

We Christians have indeed, to speak frankly, our own reasons for thinking this. As we contemplate the human body, we cannot forget what our faith teaches us about its origin, its present purpose, and its coming destiny.

We know that the body, like the soul, is from God. It is perhaps His noblest handiwork on earth. No lines of beauty, it has been said by a great writer, rival those of the human form. No mechanism in any other animal is so perfect. For our part, as we contemplate the human body, we cannot forget its Author. Even if evolution should win for itself a permanent place in our conceptions of the past history of man, it would still leave untouched the great question of man's origin. When every step of the process, continued through ages, shall have been elaborated by science, the question will still remain, Who



furnished the original material, the primal monad? Who gave the impact which set the process in motion? Who prescribed the evolutionary law? Who governed its application? Above all, who intervened, at a critical moment, to endow the subject of this evolution with a spiritual and reflective faculty, making him thus to differ, not in degree, but in kind, from the creatures around him? That which gives every work of God its first title to interest, namely the fact that it is His work, confers this title with especial emphasis on the human body.

Then, next, what is the present function of the body? Christians see in it at once a tabernacle and an instrument. It is the tabernacle of the soul. That the soul is distinct from it; that that in us which consciously perceives, thinks, wills, acts; which knows itself to be one and identical, from week to week, and from year to year, while the body is perpetually changing both its substance and its outward mien—this is for us a fact of experience. In order to be certain of it we do not need a Revelation. We know that we cannot understand the functions of the body unless we know something of the functioning organs; that, for example, we know nothing of the circulation of the blood unless we know what the heart is, and the arteries and the veins. But we can understand the intellectual and moral faculties; we can arrange, and analyze, and appreciate them, while we are altogether in ignorance of the nature and functions of the brain. In short, we are conscious that the "I," which is the seat and centre of these faculties, is radically distinct from the

bodily organism which is most immediately related to it, but which unquestionably *is* related to it, partly as a tabernacle, and partly as an instrument. The soul inhabits and employs the body; the body is the veil and the interpretation of the soul. Who does not know how the soul of man speaks through the voice, with its intonations varying from moment to moment according to the dictates from within? Who has not felt how the soul of man speaks through the eye? how, when the eye is dull and languid, when it is bright and animated, when it flashes fire and passion, these are moods of the immortal spirit within? And who does not perceive the eloquence of gesture—especially of involuntary gesture? it also is the language of something more than matter and force. We note its successive phases of energy and repose, of suggestiveness and insistence, of conciliation and defiance; and we read, in characters not to be mistaken, the language of the being that dwells within the frame whose movements it thus controls. More than this, we Christians believe that this tenant of our material frames may and does itself become the sharer of a life higher than its own; that our bodies are temples of the Eternal Spirit, because He, in a way which we cannot understand, makes our spirits His temples; and thus the body is, in our eyes, itself precious and sacred, an object of true reverence, if only by reason of Him Whom it thus veils and serves.

Again, there is the destiny of the body. As we Christians gaze on it, we know that there awaits it the humiliation of death and decay; we know that it will be resolved

into its chemical constituents ; but we look beyond ; we know also that it has a future. Beyond the hour of death is the hour of the resurrection ; beyond the humiliation of the coffin and the grave there is the life which will not die. The reconstruction of the decayed body presents to us no greater difficulty than its original creation. If we ask the question how it will be, we are told, upon what is for us sufficient authority, that "our Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."¹ Thus in this life the body is like a child who has great prospects before him, and we respect it accordingly.

¹ Phil. iii. 21.

Sermon preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, August, 1881.

Love and Knowledge

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge.”—PHIL. i. 9, 10.

SUCH a passage as this, in the Epistle to the Philippians, must ever be of great practical value to serious Christians. One of the gravest questions of the Christian life—a question perpetually recurring—is, what it is best to pray for. Happily for us, children of the Church, this question is to a great extent settled, and settled authoritatively. The Church of England teaches us prayers which have been hallowed, many of them, by the usage of some fourteen centuries or more. The use of our Prayer Book associates us with millions of Christians, who, with the same words on their lips, and the same hopes and aspirations in their hearts, have trodden the path of life, often under circumstances as unlike our own as the imagination can conceive, on their way to the home which we all hope to reach at last.

But although we can never thank God sufficiently for thus providing for our wants, we cannot, I suppose, conclude that all the needs of single souls are thus provided

for. Every soul has a history of its own; its own hopes and fears, its own failures and conquests, its own inner record of love and suffering,—known partly to itself—known perfectly to God. The most earnest prayer is based upon, grows out of, this inward region of felt, yet only half-appreciated facts; and the wide and general language of the Church, which befits the whole kingdom of souls, and in a large but most true sense meets the broad representative needs of each, fails from the nature of the case to touch all that is peculiar to the necessities of the solitary spirit. Every living soul prays some prayers which no collect has ever fully anticipated. Every soul must own to some wants, some difficulties, some apprehensions, which no liturgy has at any rate put into exact shape. And sincere communion with the All-Seeing and the Eternal involves necessarily the constant effort to place the facts of the human spirit's secret life before Him as they are—whether human language is equal to the task, or whether, as is probable, much must be left to those inward motions of the Eternal Spirit, which, we are told, cannot be uttered in language.¹

Now it is in this province of mental prayer (as it is called) that such an example as the apostle's is peculiarly valuable. When St. Paul informs us what are the blessings which he would win for his flock by prayer, he gives us a regulating principle for many of our own private prayers. He does not prescribe the words. The words, and even the attending feelings, may, often will, take care of them-

¹ Rom. viii. 26.

selves. But he tells us in what direction the stream of entreaty is to move. And since sincere prayer must be based on sincere desire—and this is stimulated by our intimate apprehension of what is best for us—such rules for prayer as these are much more than rules for prayer; they are, by implication, schemes or ideals of what is best. Thus St. Paul is teaching us the law of true progress in the Christian life when he tells us for what he prays—“This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge.”

I. Here, see, first, what St. Paul takes for granted as the basis, the underlying substance, the raw material of the Divine life in the soul of man. “This I pray, that your love may abound.” It is not “This I pray, that your knowledge may abound yet more and more in love”—but “that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge.” And this order of the ideas, need I say it, is by no means a rhetorical accident. Whenever in St. Paul’s writings knowledge and love are put in competition with each other, the precedence is assigned to love. For as compared with knowledge, love is intrinsically a stronger thing; and it is worth more practically. To be knit to God by love is better religiously than to speculate about Him, however accurately, as an abstract existence. To enwrap other men, perhaps multitudes, in the flame of a passionate enthusiasm for private or public virtue, is better than to analyze in the solitude of a study rival systems of ethical or political truth. Each has its place, but love comes first; and if St. Paul said this, we may

dare to say it was because the Divine inspiration which swayed him overruled the natural bent of his mind, and forced him to recognize the primacy of love. St. Paul, with all his passion, was, before everything else, a dialectician by nature; he bends here, as always, to the intrinsic force of things—let me rather say, to the genius of the Gospel. “Though he should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and had not charity, he was but as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal.” “Knowledge,” he knew, “puffeth up; charity edifieth.” “After that, in the wise providence of God, the world through philosophy knew not God; it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching”—the substance of that preaching was the Infinite Charity Himself—“to save them that believe.” “The philosophy of the world,” he says, “is foolishness with God.” “Charity,” he maintains, “is even greater than the great graces of faith and hope;” how infinitely must it transcend knowledge!¹

It may indeed be objected that, if love is to exist at all, it must have an object, and that the loving soul must have some knowledge of this object. And reference may be made to St. Peter’s precept, that Christians should give all diligence to add to their “faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity,”²—where charity is represented not

¹ Cor. xiii. 1; viii. 1; i. 21; xiii. 13.

² 2 St. Peter v. 7.

as the foundation but as the crowning of the spiritual edifice. An examination of this deeply interesting passage might prove that the order of Christian attainments in it has no kind of reference to their succession in the growing life of the soul. Yet, were this otherwise, in placing faith at the head of the list, St. Peter is not really contradicting St. Paul. Faith and love, so distinct in our treatises on Christian ethics—nay, often in the pages and arguments of the New Testament, are in the living soul practically inseparable; just as in the living body the nervous and arterial systems are indissolubly blended, although for the purposes of science they must be studied apart. Yes! faith which worketh by love is the only faith worthy of the name;¹ the only faith, be well assured of it, which justifies the sinner. And if a soul loves, it loves because it already believes, because by one spiritually simple act faith has detected and love has forthwith embraced its only adequate object.

So it was practically in the first age; so it has been since. A personal affection for Jesus Christ Our Lord was then, is now, the first step, the fundamental thing, in Christian living. With the conscious life of a Christian soul begins the love of its object. It sees Jesus Christ Our Lord, and it loves Him. For He appeals at once to the affections, where they are not warped by some fatal twist, as the truest, the supreme object of love. What is it that provokes love? Beauty. In a lower and transient sense, physical beauty; in a higher and per-

¹ Gal. v. 6.

manent sense, moral, spiritual beauty. Our Lord's moral beauty acts upon the affections of a true soul as the sunshine acts upon the petals of a bud. The soul opens involuntarily at His bidding to welcome Him, to bask in His light, to rejoice in His justice, His tenderness, His veracity, His self-sacrifice. Therefore St. Paul held that to know and not to love Jesus Christ was to be self-condemned; the power of loving Jesus Christ being an unerring test of a man's heart being in the right place. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha."¹

Secondly, love is called forth by a specific kind of moral beauty, by generosity. The generosity of Jesus Our Lord in giving Himself to become incarnate and to die for us men appeals to the human heart even more powerfully than the faultless beauty of His character. The story of the Passion has melted heathen savages, ere now, to tears; the philosophy of self-sacrifice is always intelligible. "Scarcely for a righteous man," observes St. Paul, "will one die: yet perchance for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."² "He loved me, and gave Himself for me;"³ this is the reflection which bids love spring up in the Christian heart; and thus "the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they

¹ 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

² Rom. v. 7, 8.

³ Gal. ii. 20.

which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them, and rose again.”¹

But, further, love is a distinct endowment. It is not evoked certainly, inevitably, by the operation of the great motives referred to upon our natural sense of fitness, or upon our conscience of right. There is much without, within us, God knows, ready to nip in the bud any fair flowers; ready to stifle any pure and lofty impulses of the soul. The provocation from without must be reinforced, corresponded to by some heaven-sent influence within. And thus genuine Christian love is an infused grace: “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Which is given unto us.”² What else might have been a passing gust of feeling, human perhaps to the verge of sin in its real colouring, is thus transfigured, strengthened, steadied, made permanent by the breath of the Most Holy: it becomes thenceforth a constant and powerful influence, penetrating, swaying, ruling, the inmost life.

Yes! brethren, let us be sure of it—the fundamental thing in the renewed soul is the love of Jesus Christ, God and Man. To love Him our Saviour is to love God, and to love our fellow-men. To love Jesus is to love the awful, illimitable, inaccessible God, so presented as to be within the compass of our finite capacities; condescending to us in a form in which He and His Ineffable Perfections have become, if I may so say, concrete and intelligible. To love Jesus is to love man—man set forth

¹ 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

² Rom. v. 5.

before our eyes in such sort as worthily to claim our ungrudging love ; man, relieved from the dreadful entail of his historical, ever-accumulating burden of corruption ; man, restored for once to a perfect correspondence, which is at once evident, with the primal sketch, the complete idea, the archetype of his being. And thus the love of Jesus is the common source of all that is most purely spiritual in religion, and of all that is most fruitful and creative in philanthropy. It is with St. Paul as with St. John ; it is now as in the first age ; it will be to end of time, as now, the fundamental thing in the religious life.


Sermon preached at Cuddeston, 1868.

The Moral Groundwork of Clerical Training

“But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?”—JOB xxviii. 12.

THE idea of the Wisdom or Kochmah, as all careful readers of the Bible will be aware, fills a great place in the mind of the Old Testament. It is, indeed, the subject of a distinct literature, within the compass of the sacred Canon. In their different ways, the Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and the Book of Job are devoted to treating of it. Wisdom is no mere synonym for useful or general information; still less does it stand for practical knowingness, far-sightedness, shrewdness in the affairs of life. It is much more akin to what the Greeks, or some of them, meant by philosophy, and yet it differs from philosophy in some important respects. Like the Greeks, the Hebrews had an ardent longing to get to the bottom of things: but then the problems which exercised the Greek thinkers so largely were settled, and settled on the highest authority, for the Hebrews. The revealed doctrine of a creation—that is to say, of a creation out of nothing—made a good half of early Greek speculation superfluous. The Hebrew moved about the world knowing how it and how he came to be; the Greek spent

his life in feeling his way towards the truth which every Hebrew child had learnt in his infancy. But the Hebrew mind, satisfied as to the origin of things by the Revelation entrusted to the Patriarchs and the Great Lawgiver, turned its eye, with constant and earnest anxiety, in the direction of their final causes. A vivid and unquestioning faith in God's active Providence naturally gave this turn to Hebrew thought. God had made, God sustained all that was ; but what was the purpose in detail of His creation ? What was the intended relation of Israel to surrounding nations ? What were the guiding principles and ends of all which in politics and society met the eye ? what was the universal truth which might be traced beneath the varieties of the individual or the national ? The answers to questions of this kind constituted the Wisdom or Kochmah ; but then this answer was furnished, not by the enterprise and collision of human minds, but from above. Hebrew speculation, at least for some centuries, and in its highest and permanent forms, was itself inspired : and thus we are taught the general aspects of human life as exhibited in the Proverbs, or the nothingness of all earthly things, as in Ecclesiastes, or the mystical side and import of human love as in the Canticles, or some relations of suffering to demerit, as in the Book of Job. In a later age, at Alexandria, Wisdom and philosophy, the inspired and the human, the assured and the tentative, meet within the precincts of a great school of intelligence and culture. In the Books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus we see Israel thinking of the same



problems as in Job and Ecclesiastes, and the Proverbs, but with a great store of revealed truth to fall back upon, and under the eye of Greek Philosophy. How to acquire wisdom ; how wisdom will be rewarded ; how the history of Israel and Israel's saints and heroes, is a long illustration of the power of wisdom :—these are the topics of the book which bears the name. Wisdom becomes in its pages—as had been already hinted in the language of the Proverbs—less and less a quality, more and more a being clothed with the attributes of personality. And thus at last Wisdom is identified with its true Source, the Eternal and Personal Thought or Word of God ; and we find ourselves in the prologue of St. John's Gospel, and face to face with the central Truth of Christianity.

Now, in one respect the Books of the Kochmah or Wisdom within the Hebrew Canon witness remarkably to the world-wide importance of their subject. Although generally of Israelitish origin, they are one and all remarkably free from the peculiarities and allusions which would connect them with the history, the worship, the home of Israel. Already they seem to belong less to Israel than to the whole human family. In the Book of Proverbs, which treats of the relations of human life in its most universal aspects, the name of Israel, the covenant people, is not once mentioned. In Ecclesiastes, which exhibits the proved nothingness of all earthly things, Jehovah, the covenant-name of God, does not once occur. If the background of the Song of Solomon belongs to Israel, the subject is of universal interest, at least, in

its import, and mystic reference; and the Book of Job, dealing with a fundamental question of human life and experience, places us altogether outside the history, and in the main outside the thought and associations of Israel. There are no allusions to the Law of Sinai, to the promises, to the history, to the worship of Israel, in the whole compass of the book.¹ In this somewhat negative but very important manner, the writings of Kochmah in the Old Testament are a direct anticipation of the Gospel. Jesus Christ our Lord, if we may dare so to speak, is peculiarly at home in them—not simply as One whom they prefigure, or to whom they lead on, but as their true complement and point of unity. They are universal and human in their range of interest; so is He. They grapple with the most fundamental aspects of life and destiny; He explains those aspects. They create immense moral wants, which He satisfies. They name and centre in a word to which He alone has done justice; it is His Name from Everlasting,—the Wisdom of the Father.

I. Where shall wisdom be found? Job asks this question in his last address to his friends.² This address forms the transition from the complete entanglement of the thought produced by the three stages³ through which the discussion of the relations of suffering to demerit

¹ Cf. Delitzsch, *Das Buch Job*, Einleitung, § 2. *Der Chokma-character des Buches*, p. 5, 6.

² Chaps. xxvii., xxviii.

³ (I.) Chaps. iv.-xiv.; (II.) Chaps. xv.-xxi.; (III.) Chaps. xxii.-xxvi.

has successively passed to the solution, begun in Job's soliloquy,¹ continued through the four speeches of Elihu,² and completed by the voice of the Lord acknowledged in the conscience of His suffering servant.³ Job himself has been insisting, as his friends had insisted, upon the punishment which awaits the ungodly,⁴ almost, as it would seem at first sight, making an admission which is fatal to his own logical consistency. But then he maintains unflinchingly that he is not an evil-doer in the sense of his friends. He admits the truth of their pictures of the destiny of the wicked, but he will not incur the guilt of falsehood, by allowing himself to acquiesce in their verdict as to himself. And this leads him to appeal to and fall back upon the great gift of Wisdom, with which God had endowed certain of His servants, and which enabled those who possessed it to get far beyond the superficial idea that all the suffering around us is of a penal character. Suffering would be seen sometimes to have another and a higher purpose in a true philosophy of the universe; and what this purpose was, was taught, as much else was taught, by the Wisdom or Kochmah. Where was this Wisdom to be found? This larger and comprehensive insight into the nature of things could not come to man, Job maintains, from without, in the way of ordinary practical experience. It was not, for instance, to be acquired by the workers in those ancient mines, of

¹ Chaps. xxix.-xxx.

² Chaps. xxxviii-xlii. 6.

³ Chaps. xxxii.-xxxvii.

⁴ Chap. xxvii. 11-23.

which the traces are probably to be found in the Bashan country.¹

“For there is a mine for the silver,
And a place for the gold which they refine.
Iron is taken from the dust,
And they pour out stone as copper.”²

* * * * *

They break away a shaft from him who remains above,
There, forgotten by every foot (that walks),
They hang far from men, and swing.”³

And thus, as he pursues, human enterprise, even in these distant days, could open

“The way that no bird of prey knoweth,
Whereat the eye of the hawk hath not gazed ;
Which the proud beast of prey hath not trodden,
Over which the lion hath not passed.”⁴

And in language so vivid that it might seem to anticipate the achievements of modern engineering, he tells how the miner

“Layeth his hand upon the pebbles,
And turneth up the mountains from the root ;
He cutteth canals through the rocks,
And his eye seeth every precious thing.
That they may not leak, he dammeth up streams,
And that which is hidden he bringeth to light.”⁵

And then Job pauses. His friends might have sup-

¹ Compare the interesting quotation from Wetzst in Delitzsch, das Buch Job, p. 328. Besides these mines in North Gilead, the poet of the Book of Job may have witnessed mining operations (1) in Nubia, for gold ; (2) between Petra and Zoar, for copper ; (3) in the Lebanon.

² Chap. xxviii. 1-2. ³ Ib. ver. 4. ⁴ vv. 7, 8. ⁵ vv. 9-11.

posed that all this enterprise, in which they probably had shared, and which corresponded in that early age to the very foremost achievements of thinkers and practical men in our own day, was the high-road to wisdom ; or that, at any rate, Job has in reserve some crowning word of praise for that which has wrung from him such sympathy and admiration. But Job only asks—

“ Where shall wisdom be found,
And where is the place of understanding ? ”¹

Job maintains that if man should search in every direction through the inhabited world ;² if he even could penetrate to the subterranean waters ;³ if he could offer the things most precious in the judgment of that primitive age—the onyx and the sapphire, gold and glass, pearls, crystal, and corals, the “ Ethiopian topaz,” the pure fine gold⁴—yet wisdom, the profoundest perception of the nature of things, would still be beyond his reach. How, then, could it be attained ? Job shall answer in words which we may not venture to condense :—

Wisdom is veiled from the eyes of all living,
And hidden from the fowls of the heaven :
Destruction and death say,—
With our ears we heard a report of it.
God understandeth the way to it,
And He,—He knoweth its place.
For He looketh to the ends of the earth,
And He seeth under the whole heaven ;
When He appointed to the wind its weight,
And weighed the water according to measure ;

¹ ver. 12.

² ver. 13.

³ ver. 14.

⁴ vv. 16–19.

When He appointed to the rain its law,
And a course to the lightning of the thunder ;
Then saw He it and declared it,
Took it as a pattern, and tested it also ;
And unto man He said, Behold !
The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom ;
And to depart from evil is understanding.¹

Wisdom is here the Ideal according to which God created the world. The idea of natural law as an integral portion of creation, regulating the wind, regulating the distribution of water upon the surface of the globe, regulating the rainfall, regulating the course of the electric fluid, could not be more clearly expressed ; but Job maintains that this creation of the world, thus marshalled under the reign of law, was, at least in a certain sense, the unveiling of Wisdom. It was then that Wisdom—hidden eternally in God,—was “perceived ;” it took substantial realization and development ; it was searched out and tested ; its demiurgic powers were set in motion that it might clothe itself in an outward and visible form. It is the same idea of Wisdom as that in the Book of Proverbs ;² the complex unity of divine ideas,—in which all the departments of creation, all its laws and processes, are seen from Eternity by the Infinite Mind, not as already actual but in a mirror. Here it is plain that we are not far from the full revelation of the Word or Logos : only the Logos is personal, while as yet the Wisdom of the

¹ Chap. xxviii, 21-28.

² Prov. viii. 22-31. On the general relation of the Proverbs to the Book of Job, compare Delitzsch, *Das B. Job, Einleitung*, p. 17, sqq.

Proverbs and of Job is probably an impersonal model of all creaturely existence.¹ When God thus gave outward form to Wisdom in creating the world, He also gave man the law, by obeying which man corresponds to what he was meant to be in the archetypal world—and participates, after his measure, in wisdom. A comprehensive intellectual apprehension of the real nature of things is beyond man's mental grasp. What do we mean by matter, what by spirit, what by the universe, what by our own personal existence? The moment we begin to define these things, we see how little we know after all; how absolute knowledge everywhere eludes us. But eternal moral truth is not beyond man's moral grasp; and it is even more truly part of the *Kochmah*, than is intellectual Truth. Fearing the Lord, and renouncing evil—this is man's largest share in Wisdom; this is the best approach that man can make to what we should nowadays call a philosophy of the Absolute. He cannot without a revelation really contemplate things as they are,—as they are seen by God: but he can correspond to the realities as God sees them by obedience to elementary moral truth—by fear of the perfect moral Being—by practical renunciation of evil. It is the very motto of the Hebrew doctrine of the *Kochmah* which we have in the text—this substitution of obedience for ambitious

¹ Delitzsch, u. s. p. 341. Die Weisheit ist nicht geradezu eins mit dem Logos, aber der Logos ist der Demiurg, durch welchen Gott nach jenem innergöttlichen Urbilde die Welt ins Dasein gesetzt hat. Die Weisheit ist das unpersönliche Modell, der Logos persönliche Werkmeister nach jenem Modell.

speculation. "Be not wise in thine own eyes," says Solomon; "fear the Lord and depart from evil."¹ "By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil," he says elsewhere.² "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,"³ says Solomon, "of wisdom" says the Psalmist:⁴ "a good understanding have all they that do them after—the praise of it endureth for ever."

¹ Prov. iii. 7.

² Prov. xvi. 6.

³ Prov. i. 7.

Psa. cxi. 10. Cf. Delitzsch, *in loc.*

Sermon preached at Cuddeston, 1873.

The One Salvation

'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.'—
ACTS iv. 12.

You may do a great deal with a multitude of men, short of saving it, although you deal with such a multitude only in the block. You may protect it against outward enemies; you may endow it with new institutions; nay, you may enrich it with new ideas, with new enthusiasms, with new modes of feeling, with new traditions of social and intellectual life. But to *save* men is quite another matter. If you would take them out of the strong gripe of evil and falsehood, and translate them into the realm of goodness and truth; if you would change their inward dispositions as well as their outward habits; if you would make the guilty past as though it had not been; if you would cut off the entail of its penal consequences; if you aim at making them, in the language of Scripture, "new creatures,"—you will have to treat with them one by one, to reckon with each separate soul, as if it were alone in the universe, and there were none other in existence. The soul of man is intrinsically too great and awful, too complex and magnificent a thing

to be dealt with as one animal in a drove of cattle, as one pebble in a heap which is being shovelled away. The soul of the weakest woman, of the youngest child, has that in it, or rather is that, in the awful solitude of its indestructible life, which demands all the respect, all the concentration of purpose, all the energy and resource, whether of thought or charity, that can possibly be given to it. Has not the Maker of us all made each one of our souls, unlike, in some respects, any other in His universe? Did not the Redeemer of Men, who gave Himself a ransom for all, yet, as St. Paul felt, die for each with the same deliberate concentration of purpose as if He had to die only for one? ¹ Does not the Eternal Spirit, by Whom the whole Church is governed and sanctified, yet dwell in the fulness of His majesty in each regenerate and living spirit? And do we not trace the same principle when we would assist each other in the truest way which is permitted us? Does not the mother who would really help her child take it apart from other children, and speak to it, as if all her love and interest was concentrated upon it alone, in order to convince it that she has its case fully in view, and is thinking of none else while she speaks to it? Does not the Christian pastor know that the words which he addresses in the pulpit to multitudes are powerless as compared with the words which he speaks privately to individual men; when, standing as one soul face to face with another soul,—contemplating all the meaning, all the blessedness

¹ Gal. ii. 20.

all the awfulness of a separate, indestructible life,—he grapples with the particular wants, fears, dangers, of his fellow-man, of his fellow-sinner, beneath the eye of their common Lord? When men talk, as you may sometimes hear them talk, using what I cannot but think a shallow and irreverent phrase, about “influencing the masses,” they seem to think that the human family is, after all, only a huge lump of plastic matter which may be shaped or moulded at pleasure this way or that by some outward influence. Our Lord dealt with a Peter, a Mary Magdalen, a Thomas, as if there were no other beings in existence, although He by no means prescribed or neglected those less powerful influences which affect collected multitudes of men; and salvation in its deepest, nay, in its one legitimate sense, is the rescuing of single souls from present sin and from future misery.

Salvation in that sense was no monopoly of Israel. What was Israel that it should claim for itself the whole power of the saving Name? The final, the absolute Religion, could not but be also universal. The question of the Gentiles had not yet been raised, as it was a few years after; but there was the broad commission of Christ to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Therefore, this deepest sense of the word salvation has all the value now, for you and for me, that it had for St. Peter and the first Christians. Some of you, through no merit of your own, but only through your Saviour’s grace and mercy, made, as you were in your Baptism, members of Christ, children of God, and

heirs of the kingdom of heaven—may have never broken away from that state of privilege and blessedness. You may still hold on to the Pierced Hand which then locked itself in yours that it might lead you across the bleak deserts of life, to your Eternal Home. But with the majority it is otherwise. The “old infection of nature,” as Christian theology calls it, some perverse will, some strong, overmastering passion, gaining strength with years, will often, as Plato could say, grasp the reins which should be held by the illuminated reason, and drive desperately like Phaethon down the steep of heaven, though it be into the abyss of sensuality or of crime. It is, alas ! no rare catastrophe. Sometimes it is proclaimed in visible profligacy and worldly ruin ; more often it mantles its shame under the folds of an unforfeited respectability. But at last Phaethon reaches the floor of hell : the soul lies before God paralyzed—dead. In that utter misery and degradation, all sight of necessary truth is lost : the eye of the soul is darkened. All pure affection is impossible : real love is killed out by the gross and incessant demands of sense. All strength of will for good is gone. The will is enslaved ; it is at the beck and call of each solicitation to evil. No voice is heard in that loneliness and degradation save now and then a wild wail of agony sounding through the caverns of the deserted spirit and echoing despair. And thus a being who might have had companionship with angels, feeds on the husks that the very swine of creation eat ; the greatness of man’s capacity is the measure of his ruin. Who will raise, who

will save him? Ah! you may think it a dream, but it is true: now, as surely, as completely as eighteen centuries ago, Jesus Christ saves men even from depths like these. Now, as then, He washes out all the stains of a guilty past; now, as then, He turns back upon itself, with an incomparable union of tenderness and strength, the whole current of destiny. He gives new desires, new aims, new hopes, new enthusiasms; He inspires a hatred even for the garment spotted by the flesh; He renews, by His Spirit, little by little all that His enemy had destroyed; He brings forth His own enjewelled robe of Righteousness, and bids the soul, trembling with the joy of penitence, to sit, as the apostle says, in heavenly places side by side with Himself.¹ There are men and women living who could assure you that this is no sentimental rhapsody; that it is a hard fact, of which they have themselves had experience. They have been at the very gates of eternal death, and have met One who could and did save them, aye, to the uttermost.²

Jesus can save: it is a matter of faith, and thank God, it is a matter of experience. But, the apostle adds, "Neither is there the salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Had St. Peter lived among us now, would he, think you, have put the matter in this way? Would he not have avoided any appearance of comparison or rivalry between the Gospel and other religious systems? Would

¹ Eph. ii. 6; Col. ii. 12, 13.

² Heb. vii. 25.



he not have said : " It is enough for me to proclaim that there is salvation in Christ ; I do not know, I am not concerned to determine whether other prophets, other doctrines, other agencies can save ? I do not wish to claim for Him any monopoly of saving power ; I have no inclination to dispute the pretensions of Jewish rites or of Greek philosophies. No doubt there is much to be said for every religion in the world, and the professors of a religion have only to be sure that they are consistent ; that they are careful to fashion their lives according to its law and the light of nature ? It is enough for me to say that the religion of Christ will save you if you choose : I am not so illiberal as to maintain that you cannot be sure of salvation without it."

Why did not St. Peter say this ? Why did he state the very converse of it,—“ Neither is there the salvation in any other : for there is no other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved ” ?

It was because he had in his heart and on his lips, not a human speculation or theory, but, as he held, the Truth—the One, Final, Absolute Truth. The proof of that to his mind, the overwhelming proof, was the life and teaching of his Master, crowned, attested by the miracle—the recent, the certain, the unassailable miracle—of the Resurrection. God had spoken : and here was what He said. If St. Peter had felt himself to be only the representative of one among many human doctrines ; if he had been bidding for popular favour towards a faith or a view of life which could be traced to no higher a

source than some generous but human heart, or some inventive but fallible brain, then he would not have dared to say, "Neither is there salvation in any other." Error may pay insincere or splendid compliments to that which contradicts it; it has its successive moods of weak concession and of irrational obstinacy. Truth can only say firmly, tenderly, unvaryingly—"It is I who save, whether the intellect from falsehood, or the will from weakness and corruption. Neither is there salvation in any other."

And the Gospel has said this from the first. He, Who is its Author and its object, with His Eye upon all the doctrines, all the speculations, all the religious systems and religious teachers which in successive ages have claimed the homage of the human heart, did not shrink from saying, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."¹ And His Apostles and Evangelists, catching the tremendous import of these words, repeat them in every variety of phrase and inference. "There is one Mediator between God and man," says St. Paul, with reference to certain Gnostic systems of many intermediate agents, "the Man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all."² "He is the propitiation for our sins," says St. John, who is thinking of the rites of Judaism; "and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."³ "Other foundation," says St. Paul, "can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."⁴ "This is the record," says St. John, "that God hath

¹ St. John xvi. 6.

² I Tim. ii. 5, 6.

³ I St. John ii. 2.

⁴ I Cor. iii. 11.

given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life ; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”¹ “Though we or any angel from heaven,” cries St. Paul, “preach any other doctrine unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”² “He that believeth the Son,” says St. John, “hath everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”³ The Ephesians, before their conversion, says St. Paul, were men “having no hope, and without God in the world.”⁴ “We know,” exclaims St. John, “that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”⁵ “Lord, to whom shall we go ?” cried St. Peter to his Master ; “Thou hast the words of eternal life.”⁶ “Neither is there the salvation in any other,” proclaims St. Peter to his Master’s executioners : “for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

There are, of course, many ways of saying this ; but there is no mistaking the accent of tenderness which may be heard in the sternest language of the Gospel. The Apostles speak, not as dialecticians passionately contending for a logical victory, and riveting the charge of error upon their opponents ; nor yet as men with a taste and aptitude for government, who claim the monopoly of truth and grace as a mighty instrument of moving and regulating the hearts of men. They speak

¹ 1 St. John v. 11, 12.² Gal. i. 8.³ St. John iii. 36.⁴ Eph. ii. 12.⁵ St. John v. 19.⁶ St. John vi. 68.

as men who have found for themselves the secret of happiness, the secret of hope, the secret of life, the secret and warrant of salvation; and their highest ambition is that others should share the privilege. They would rather appear to be uncharitable than be disloyal to that true and highest charity which "gives light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and guides the feet of wanderers into the way of peace."

Sermon preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, 1873.

The Power of Christ's Resurrection

"That I may know Him, and the power of His Resurrection."

PHIL. iii. 10.

"THE Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon!"¹ That was the whisper, the exclamation, which passed from mouth to mouth among the astonished disciples during the long hours of the first Easter Day. That He who had been crucified and laid in the grave had actually burst the bonds of death, and was again abroad, visibly moving in the world of living men, was the astonishment, the joy, the triumph of His first followers. First one and another, and then groups of friends, and then large bodies of men, were admitted to see this Conqueror of the Grave, to listen to Him, to speak with Him, to satisfy themselves by hearing, and sight, and touch, that the day of Calvary had not for them really closed in a night of unrelieved darkness,—that a brighter morning had indeed dawned upon the earth.

"That I may know Him, and the power of His Resurrection." That was the aspiration of the Apostle of the

¹ St. Luke xxiv. 34.

Gentiles, some thirty years later, breathed forth from his prison in Rome. In St. Paul's mind there was not the shadow of a doubt as to the fact of the Resurrection. When he wrote these words, the Resurrection was still some twenty-five years or so nearer to him, in point of time, than the Battle of Waterloo is to us Englishmen of to-day; and he had been pondering over it, if we except some two years at most, during the whole of the interval that had elapsed. Apart from the incidents of his Conversion, St. Paul had heard all about the Resurrection from a large circle of men whom he could implicitly trust; and his unquestioning belief in it is the necessary key to the chief efforts and enthusiasms of his later life. But he had not done with it, because he was certain of its historical truth: he would fain grasp more and more perfectly what he calls its "power." Hence the passionate aspiration, "That I may know Him, and the power of His Resurrection."

What is the sense of this word "power"? There is no room for mistake as to its general import. By the power of a fact we mean the bearing, the consequences, as distinct from the existence of the fact; we mean the inferences which may be drawn from it, or the influence which it will naturally exert. Apart from its "power," a mere fact, looked at in its barren isolation, is an uninteresting thing; and, in truth, there are no facts altogether without power of some kind in God's universe. That so many thousand human beings have assembled in honour of our Lord, beneath the dome of this

Cathedral Church on this Easter night, is a statistical fact, which, could it be ascertained, would have no particular interest; if it were not that, linked to that fact, is the idea of its vast, its complex, and, for all but One Being, its unascertainable power. So many intelligences enlightened by the truth of Christ, so many hearts warmed by the love of Christ, so many wills braced by the grace of Christ, and, alas! it must be added, so many souls brought face to face with grace and truth, yet without spiritual benefit, and therefore most assuredly not without spiritual loss;—this is the power of the fact before us, not the less certain because its precise measure cannot be taken, not the less interesting because its import reaches far beyond the present moment—beyond the confines of time, to the distant horizons of eternity. And St. Paul's meaning in the text is that, so far as he may, he would, in respect of a far more momentous fact, measure at least some departments of its power, and make some progress in discoveries which man can never exhaust. The power of the Resurrection!—Let us endeavour with the Apostle to consider it this evening, in some few, at least, of its several elements, and with a view, if it may be, to some practical effect upon our inward and outward lives.

The power of the Resurrection, then, is to be seen first of all in a Christian's *thought*. It is the fundamental fact which satisfies him of the absolute truth of the Religion of Christ.

When, after their Master's Ascension into heaven, the

Apostles went forth to convert the world to His Gospel, what was the most prominent topic in their sermons? Every child who has read the Acts of the Apostles will at once answer, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the burden of the first sermon that Apostle ever preached, of St. Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost. David had foretold how Christ should rise; Jesus, Who claimed to be Christ, had risen just as David had foretold; "whereof," adds the Apostle, speaking for himself and his brethren, "we all are witnesses."¹ This is the main point of the explanation which the same Apostle made to the crowd of people who had watched the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. If it was not the voice of the Apostle, but the name of Jesus, which had made the lame man strong; this was because, although Jesus had been crucified, He had also been raised from the dead: the Apostles were there to witness it.² The statement was deliberately repeated by St. Peter before the court which afterwards set to try the Apostles;³ and the Sadducees, who mainly composed it, are said to have been particularly irritated because the Apostles preached through Jesus the Resurrection from the dead.⁴ When, after their imprisonment and deliverance, the Apostles were again brought before the Sanhedrim, the answer was still the same. "We ought to obey God rather than men; the God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. . . . We are His witnesses of these

¹ Acts ii. 24-32.

² Acts iii. 15.

³ Acts iv. 10.

⁴ Acts iv. 2.

things.”¹ The private instructions of the Apostles corresponded with their public teaching: the main point in St. Peter’s address to the household of Cornelius is this:—“ Him Whom they slew and hanged on a tree, God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly, . . . even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead.”² Indeed, when the historian of the Acts would describe the substance of the earliest Christian preaching, he states that “with great power gave the Apostles witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus.”³

Nor was it otherwise in the popular teaching of that other great Apostle, who is to the later what St. Peter is to the earlier history of the Acts. St. Paul had not seen our risen Lord while He was on earth; although at and after his conversion he had evidence that Jesus was living and ruling both on earth and in heaven. St. Paul hands on the witness to the Resurrection almost in the words of St. Peter. Preaching in the Jews’ synagogue of the Pisdian Antioch, he first observes that the Jews had unintentionally fulfilled the prophecies in desiring Pilate that Jesus should be slain. Then he adds that God raised Jesus from the dead; that Jesus was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who were still His witnesses to the people; and that it was by raising up Jesus that God had fulfilled His great promises to the fathers of Israel.⁴ Preaching to a crowd of

¹ Acts v. 29–32.

² Acts x. 40, 41.

³ Acts iv. 33.

⁴ Acts xiii. 30–37.



more or less educated Pagans from the steps of the Areopagus in Athens, St. Paul insists that God's dealings with men in times past and His present mercies to them all pointed to a coming judgment ; while God had shown who was to be the judge, by raising Him from the dead.¹ The Resurrection was so prominent in St. Paul's teaching at Athens, that the heathen audience imagined the Greek word for it to be the name of a new divinity.² And, if we omit other illustrations, the climax of St. Paul's defence before Agrippa represents it as only the natural end of the Jewish prophecies, "that Christ should suffer and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead."³ Indeed, St. Paul summarizes his teaching in writing to the Corinthians :—"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received ; how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."⁴

Now here, first, it is abundantly clear that the Apostles felt certain of their facts. They did not merely whisper in assemblies of the faithful that Jesus was risen, as a private topic of comfort for Christian souls ; they carried their bold assertion of the Resurrection before tribunals, which were filled by their keen, bitter, and contemptuous enemies, and challenged them to gainsay it if they could. If, after the fashion of modern times, the ruling Sadducees had appointed a scientific commission to investigate the


¹ Acts xvii. 29-31.

² Acts xvii. 18.

³ Acts xxvi. 23.

⁴ I Cor. xv. 3, 4.

matter, nobody would have been better pleased than the Apostles. They had nothing to lose, they had everything to gain, by a thorough searching inquiry. It has been said of political revolutions, that they are not to be made with rose-water ; and it is certainly true of great religious changes, that, if you do not effect them, as Mahomet for instance, effected his, by material force, you must have some strictly impregnable facts at your disposal. And if the Apostles had believed the Resurrection to be, let us say, only probable and not really certain ; if they had felt the ground of hard fact on which they stood to be giving way, ever so little, under their feet ; they never could have braced themselves to defy all the intellect, and learning, and wealth, and social and political power, and undisguised hostility and vengeance, which at the very outset of their work, they saw, in serried ranks, marshalled against them. They must have flinched from that terrible encounter unless they had been sure of their main and sustaining fact ; and we may be very certain that they looked hard at it—again and again—as was natural to men who had staked everything upon its being certain. And as they looked at it, their own memories, and the memories of those around them, only testified to its irresistible reality. It was a fact about which they felt and knew that there was no room for mistake or collusion ; they had done what the experimentalist philosophers of our own day are for ever bidding us to do ; they had trusted their senses. They had for themselves seen the Risen Jesus,



they had listened to Him, they had touched Him, they had eaten with Him ; they had seen Him again and again, and under circumstances the most various ; they had questioned their own impressions, and they had been reassured ; they had seen Him in the city and they had seen Him at the lake side ; they had seen Him in Jerusalem, in Galilee, and again at Jerusalem : five hundred persons had seen Him at once, of whom more than one-half were still living thirty years after the event. If one person might be entranced, or hallucinated, or mistaken, all these could not be so simultaneously ; if collusion was possible between two or three, it was impossible in a multitude. " We have not followed," one of them wrote in after years, " cunningly devised fables ; " " We cannot," they said a few weeks after the event—" we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."⁸ They trusted their senses sufficiently to believe One who revealed to them a world higher and greater than the world of sense ; and in doing this, certainly, they could say with the Psalmist, that He had " set their feet upon the rock, and ordered their goings, and had put a new song in their mouth, even a thanksgiving unto our God."

After preaching to the spirits in prison,¹ the Human Soul of Jesus Christ, surrounded, we may be sure, by a multitude of adoring spirits, moved upwards from the home of the ancient dead, and paused by the wounded Side of the Holy Body ; and then the dark cavern was illuminated by a flash of light, and the massive rock which

¹ 1 St. Pet. iii. 19.

closed the entrance rolled lightly away, and the soldiers whom Jewish suspicion had set to watch, were terrified into silence. And as He passed forth, with silent resistless force, from His open grave, first to instruct His disciples how to build His Church, and then to ascend in glory to His Throne above, what was the lesson which by His very action He taught, or rather which He still teaches, to the generations of men ?

“Some few of you,” He might seem to say, “know the real meaning of your destiny on the authority of God ; multitudes of you do not even suspect it ; others have conjectured it but only to question their conjectures. Henceforth let that future life, which has hitherto been for you an unsuspected or a disputed truth, be raised at once in your convictions to the rank of a certainty, absolute and indisputable. If heretofore anticipations of the last hour have seemed to poison all the brightness of your existence ; if you have looked upon the grave as a conqueror, before whom all that is strongest and most buoyant among men must bend at last in humiliation and sorrow ; here is death robbed of its sting, and the grave balked of its victory, by a triumph visible to your senses. For ‘I am He that liveth, and was dead ; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.’¹ Lift up your heads ; look beyond the narrow bounds of sense and time which hedge in your existence here ; strain your eyes if perchance you may catch sight of the illimitable horizons of the Eternal World. ‘I am

¹ Rev. i. 18.

the Resurrection and the Life ; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.'"¹

It was thus that the Resurrection of Christ spoke to the souls of the first Christians. For they knew that the power of the Resurrection was not to be confined to the Rising Redeemer. Apostles wrote that "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by His own power ;"² that "He who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus;"³ that "them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him ;"⁴ that "now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the Resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order : Christ the firstfruits ; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end——"⁵

And thus a new power has entered into human life ; the vast power of sincere belief in a future state. "God has begotten us again into a lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven."⁶ Every true Christian deeply and habitually feels that this life is an insignificant preface to the next ; that it is the shadow which precedes the

¹ 1 St. John xi. 25, 26. Order for Burial of the Dead.

² 1 Cor. vi. 14.

³ 2 Cor. iv. 14.

⁴ 1 Thess. iv. 14.

⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 20-24.

⁶ 1 St. Pet. i. 3, 4.

substance, but upon which the attainment of the substance depends; that the longest term of years is but a halt on the brink of the Eternal World—that world of awful, unchangeable realities. On such a subject as this, sincere belief is a tremendous power; it is a power which can invigorate will, and purify affection, and check the fire of passion, and quicken into life the languor of despair. Such a power cannot but elevate the whole aim and scope of life; it must forbid petty aims and indulgences; it must bid each one of us, in success and in failure, in great things and in small, in private and in public, ever forget the present in the future, and remember what is “the hope of our calling” in Jesus Christ, “and what,” if we will, our share in “the riches of the glory of His inheritance among the saints.”¹

But the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ also satisfies the second condition of an effective moral power, it assures to us the continuous presence of help from on high. To have revealed a future life to us in our unaided weakness would have been to abandon us to despair; but, as it is, the revelation of our eternal home is also the assurance of our being enabled, if we are willing, to secure it.

Ask yourselves, my brethren, if Jesus Christ had died, but had not risen from the dead, what would be your moral relationship to Him at the present moment?

When a great author, a great artist, a great conqueror, a Newton, a Wren, a Wellington, passes away, he leaves

¹ Eph. i. 18.

his work, his ideas, his reputation behind him, and through them, if you like the metaphor, being dead he yet speaketh. But his actual personality has ceased to have any appreciable relations to us. He still exists, we know, somewhere in God's universe, waiting and watching for the awful judgment. Yet to us for the time being, and so far as we know, he is himself as if he were not; he only touches us through the monuments of his activity which are left in this visible world, from which he has himself departed. And there are some who, not altogether rejecting the Christian Name, think even thus of the Lord Jesus; they speak of Him as of a Teacher, who in His day left upon the world a mark, which has hitherto proved to be ineffaceable; but they also deem Him to be one with whom they have no relations, distinct in kind from those which bind them to any of the highest among the deceased benefactors of the human race.

Now, faith in Christ's Resurrection summarily puts an end to this manner of thinking about the Life of Jesus; as if it belonged only to a distant past; or as if it belonged to the present, only through influences which have come down to us along the stream of history. The Risen Jesus lives, not through the past merely, but in the present; not for Himself only, but for us; not by a metaphor, but in reality. Although He has ascended up on high, and cherubim and seraphim, and all the orders of the heavenly intelligences prostrate themselves before His Throne in the rapture of an incessant adoration;

yet, He is now as close to His own as He was of old in the days of His Flesh ; nay, rather He is closer far than for His first disciples was as yet possible. The eye of sense sees Him not ; but He still guides, teaches, blesses, strengthens, supports, in fulfilment of His Own parting Promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This would be an imaginative reverie, if it were not for the Resurrection ; the Resurrection links it with, rivets it to, the historical reality. If Christ's Body was sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption ; if it was sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; if it was sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. But the Body, Which is raised, is the Body Which was sown. Our Lord, therefore, is present among us now, not less truly than in Palestine of old ; but the conditions of His Presence are different. Even during the Forty Days His Presence was governed by other laws than those of space and matter. He passes through the closed doors ; He appears and as suddenly He vanishes ; He presents Himself at the moment when men deem Him altogether out of reach. Those Forty Days were an education for the centuries of Christendom ; they form a transitional period between the days when Christ was seen and touched by sense, and the days when He is seen and touched by faith.

And thus, while Christ died for our sins, He rose again for our justification.¹ This is no false or barren antithesis ; the Resurrection did what the Passion had

¹ Rom. ii. 25.

left undone. On Calvary was wrought the great work of universal Redemption, Reconciliation, Pardon ; on Calvary the Father beholds mankind represented in His Divine Son, made obedient unto death, and He turns towards the fallen race in mercy and lovingkindness, with His best gifts of righteousness and peace. But if His bounty is to be brought home to souls, one by one, something more was needed ; not merely a triumph which should reveal the true value of the Passion, but a dispensation which should be the channel of its blessings to mankind. Of such a dispensation the Resurrection was the first and most necessary step ; it was the natural antecedent, if we may speak thus, of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and of the foundation and mission of the Universal Church. Thus the Resurrection presents Christ as a living power in Christendom ; and at this moment, like our predecessors, we are "ambassadors for Christ, as though Christ did beseech you by us : we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Yes, Christ indeed is here, and His presence is power ; it is the "power that worketh in us." Although centuries have passed since He died and rose, His death and Resurrection are at this moment living forces in Christian humanity. We, like the Apostle, must "be crucified with Christ." And His Resurrection has virtue in the souls of men ; that "like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." It supplies us with power to act, with power to resist and to endure ; the

power, not of self-reliance, but of childlike dependence ; not the power which springs from ignorance of danger, but the power which can accurately estimate the strength of our unseen Friend. Our risen Lord is our Light and our salvation ; whom, then, should we fear? He vouchsafes to be the strength of our life ; of whom, then, should we be afraid ?

Till with the morn those angel faces smile
Which we have loved long since, and lost awhile.

O Thou Who art indeed risen from the dead, Eternal Jesus, build up, invigorate the faith of this people, at the door of Thy empty sepulchre ; open our earth-bound eyes to the mighty world wherein Thou and Thou alone art King ; and then crucify us, if need be, to the things of time, that with Thee and by Thee, both here and hereafter, we may indeed know the true, the resistless power of Thy glorious Resurrection.

Sermon preached in St. Paul's Cathedral,
Easter Day, 1869.

Pauperism and the Love of God

“But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”—I ST. JOHN iii. 17.

LET us ask ourselves, How do we Christians come to know all the highest knowledge that we have about God? Does not St. John answer this inquiry for us? “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.”¹ Does not St. Paul say that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God has appeared in the human face of Jesus Christ?² His life upon earth, His acts, His words, His manifestation of Himself, was the manifestation of the eternal Life of God. “That,” says His Apostle, “Which was from the beginning, Which we have heard, Which we have seen with our eyes, Which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life (for The Life was manifested, and we have seen It, and bear witness and show unto you the Eternal Life, Which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us), That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.”³

¹ St. John i. 18. ² 2 Cor. iv. 6. ³ 1 St. John i. 1-3.

Now, observe that these words involve nothing less than this : that that highest knowledge of God which the Apostles possessed, and which they announced to the world, came to them mainly, not as a doctrine written in a book, or even as orally proclaimed by a teacher, but through contact with a human form. They listened to a voice ; they saw with their eyes ; they gazed earnestly, even they touched that which was before them ; it was a speaking, acting, tangible Form of flesh and blood, but it was a revelation, the highest revelation, of Deity. Their truest, purest knowledge of God was associated indissolubly with a Human Life ; their tenderest and most burning love of the Infinite Spirit was inseparable from their love of the Son of Mary. Unlike some modern systems which see in the entire history and race of mankind, in all its abounding degradations, a continuous revelation of a thus necessarily degraded god, the Gospel simply proclaims that in Jesus of Nazareth, the one Perfect Man, the Eternal "Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, so that we men beheld His glory, the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."¹

Here is the foundation of St. John's teaching about the love which we owe to our fellow-men. The Christian's love of man is a part of his love of God. His love of God is inseparable from his love of Jesus Christ, God's Only-begotten and Adorable Son, the sharer of His Essence and of His Majesty. His love of Jesus Christ,

¹ St. John i. 14.

the representative Man, is inseparable from his love of humanity. If, indeed, God were to us Christians only an abstract speculation ; if we could conceive of Him only as of some force whereby matter eternally subsisting was shaped into the forms of life around us, or as of some intelligence elaborating the design of the universe and tranquilly presiding at its operations ; then it would be hard to see why the love of such an intelligence or force—if we could love any such entity—should involve a love of our fellow-men. St. John's question would have no meaning, if we knew only these dead abstractions which are now labelled "god" in many an intellectual workshop ; it is so full of meaning because we know God as a moral Being, as Just, Compassionate, and Loving, in and through that concrete representation of His moral life which we possess in His blessed Son. It is not merely that we love our race because He loves it ; because His creating it can only be accounted for, as revelation does account for it, by unveiling the mystery of an eternal love—"I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee ;"¹ and because our love follows the current and direction of His. It is because in loving God as He has revealed Himself we love the Created Nature with which the Second Person of Subsistence in the everlasting Godhead is inseparably united. We cannot import into our love of God, any more than into our apprehension of Him, a fastidious eclecticism ; we cannot attach ourselves to one

¹ Jer. xxxi. 3.

Attribute and neglect or feel aversion for the rest ; we cannot be enamoured of His Benevolence while we shrink from His Justice, or of His Wisdom while we shut our eyes to His Omnipotence, or of His Condescensions while we ignore His Mysteriousness. And, in like manner, looking to Him as He has revealed Himself to us, we cannot really know or love or adore His spiritual supersensuous Essence, and not know or adore or love the Human Nature of Jesus, Which shares His throne. Nor can we really love Jesus and not love the race which He represents, and with which He identifies Himself. "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink : I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in : naked, and ye clothed Me not : sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee ? Then shall He answer them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto Me."¹

This, then, is the reason for St. John's implied answer to his question how the love of God can dwell in any who has no true love of human kind. For Christians the Incarnation has linked the two loves together ; and a division between the love of God and the love of man is just as impossible in Christian morals as a sundering of the Divine and Human Natures, eternally united in the

¹ St. Matt. xxv. 42-45.

Person of Jesus Christ, is impossible to Christian faith. By taking our nature upon Him the Eternal Son has given us an opportunity of showing that our love is practical and real ; that, as St. John says, " we love not in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth." ¹ Christ has shared our sorrows ; He has named the poor, the sick, the ill-treated, the imprisoned, in an especial sense His brethren. In them He suffers ; in them He places Himself before us as a suppliant for our bounty ; in them He receives alleviation ; their gratitude is His acknowledgment, their blessing is His : " Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." ²

If it be asked, " What is the feature of society at the present time which, while in itself most distressing, is also most full of menace for the future ? " it must be answered, The growth of pauperism. Pauperism is growing year by year ; it defies all our efforts to overtake it ; it is keeping pace at one end of society with the growth of luxury at the other. Pauperism is not as is poverty, a necessary element in the social life of a nation. There were great differences of rank in Israel when every man dwelt under his vine and under his fig tree ; but there was no such thing as a pauper class. Poverty, indeed, the lack of the comforts of life, is, in all ages, the condition of a large proportion of human beings. For it is impossible to avoid the social inequalities created by the tenure of property, such inequalities being inherent in

¹ 1 St. John iii. 18.

² St. Matt. xxv. 40.

the nature of things, and persistently recurring in the modern and popular societies which have risen on the ruins of feudalism. In virtue of causes which operate everywhere and at all times, property always tends to concentrate itself in the hands of the relatively few ; and thus the larger number can only support themselves by daily work, and often with some difficulty. But our modern pauperism means a much more serious thing than the existence of an unpropertied class at the base of society.¹ It means an absence, not of the comforts, but of the necessaries of life ; it means a despairing acquiescence in want as in something inevitable by large numbers of men ; it means the creation of a class which feels itself disinherited, so incapable of the duties as to be deprived of the rights of human society ; and thus it means, in the long run, not merely class misery—misery vast and untold—but general disorder. Political concessions do not readily heal wounds which are felt daily and hourly in a struggle—if it be still a struggle—for existence ; and a sympathy only issuing in the elaboration of some communistic paradox, which does not cause the faintest alarm to the possessors of property, is no more calculated to grapple with pauperism than an amateur director of some festive performances by a county militia is fitted to conduct a campaign upon the Rhine or the Danube.

The expedients which are often proposed for dealing with pauperism remind us of the error of trusting to

¹ Professor Rogers.

external applications when a burning fever is raging within. "Organize labour," says this economist, with easy confidence ; as if so vast and complex a thing as human labour could really be organized, except by the Hand Which framed society. "Raise the rate of wages," urges another ; as if, supposing wages to be generally raised, there would not be a corresponding rise in the price of articles of consumption. "Double your taxes upon large incomes," cries a third ; "let the Law be the almoner and providence of the poor ;" forgetting that nothing so dries up the free sources of charitable relief as an effort to make charity legal ; since the man who will give as much as he can when you appeal to his generosity, will stint his gift down to the last farthing when his money is extorted in the name of the Law. "No," exclaims a fourth ; "the real remedy is to make more work for the people by increasing the productions of the country ; and in order to encourage production, it is necessary to consume." According to this theory, the luxury of the wealthy is the real alleviation of the sufferings of the poor : the more splendid your dresses, your saloons, your equipages, the more lavish your entertainments, the more princely your general expenditure, the better for the classes that want and can work. You consume for their benefit, it would appear, rather than for your own ; you enjoy yourselves, not because you like doing so, but with the disinterested object of finding labour for the unemployed, and so of rescuing them from pauperism. That the luxury of the rich is the interest of


the poor might have seemed too paradoxical to be maintained; but the theory has been advocated in broad daylight by more than one recent writer of distinction, and to question it is, we are told, to be forgetful of the plainest laws of political economy.

That there is an apparent reasonableness about any effort to encourage labour is undeniable; nor do I wish to deny that it is for the interest of a country, and especially of its producing classes, that there should be a full demand upon production. But if this demand is created by a large expenditure upon articles of luxury in the upper class, is the capital of the country augmented, or is it wealth redistributed in such a sense as to diminish its pauperism? Surely not. Capital being that part of wealth which is set aside to assist future production, it follows that the investment of wealth in luxuries which are consumed or wear out decreases the capital of a country; and if it be urged that the capital of a country is really decreased by those who make the articles of luxury, and not by those who purchase them, it is obvious to reply that it is the demand alone which stimulates and sustains the supply.¹ Nor is the advice we are considering to be justified by any theory of indefinite production. There is a certain measure both of production and consumption which corresponds to the real well-being of a country at any given epoch of its existence; and if you stimulate artificially the productive power of a country in a particular direction, in the long run you only


¹ Fawcett, "Handbook Polit. Econ."

create a glut in the market which reacts disastrously upon the interests of labour, and at last augments the pauperism which you are anxious to reduce.

It is economically false, then, to suppose that an increased demand for luxuries on the part of an upper class ultimately involves the diminution whether of poverty or of pauperism. But this is not all. If, in order to relieve working poverty by providing an outlet for a surfeit of production, we should preach a gospel of boundless luxury to the consuming classes, our converts would be inevitably and fatally demoralized by their conversion, and in turn they would demoralize the classes beneath them, and in this way, too, would aggravate the evil which they hope to cure. For in all countries, especially in a country which inherits so much of its feudal past as our own, there is a perpetual stream of influence, whether for good or evil, or both combined, flowing down through a thousand avenues of intercourse and observation, of contact, it might seem, the most occasional and unimportant, from the higher classes to the classes beneath them. It is this social law (suffer me here to speak with the freedom which is a prerogative of my ministry) that enhances so enormously before God and man the responsibilities of a higher class. Half the sins which in their grosser forms among the millions at the base of society fall in our police-courts day by day under the penal notice of the law, are but imitations of analogous but unpunished sins of a refined and discriminating type at the summits of society ; the same mischief



in principle and essence, is only translated into the form which is natural to a different set of social circumstances. And if this be so, do you suppose that the luxury of the wealthy can really be the alleviation of the poor? Granting for the moment that it increases the demand for certain forms of labour, does it not more than counteract that measure of material good by the inevitable accompaniment of moral mischief? Do you imagine that the poor man will look on unmoved, uninfluenced, while you double your personal expenditure, even though it be doubled on his behalf? Is it out of the question that he too, in his own sphere and way, should conceive the ambition of rivalling you? Will he not apply, sooner or later, to the public-house and to the casino, the principles of administering property which he traces instinctively but surely in your parks and palaces? Or do you expect him to say, "There are two distinct moralities for human society: the wealthy may spend upon themselves as much as they like, for they have much; the poor are bound to deny themselves for the sake of others, for they have little"? No, my brethren, you are too reasonable, too just, to expect him to say that; you know that he will, after his own fashion, copy your luxury as well and as long as he can, until his imitation has landed him in ruin; you know that it is your privilege, as well as your responsibility, to set him an example, and that you cannot divest yourselves of it if you would. And therefore it is that the doctrine I am considering is as morally pernicious as it is economically false. The increased



luxury of the rich leads to the increased demoralization of the poor; and their demoralization involves, even in this world, their ruin. As far as this world is concerned by taking due precautions, the wealthy can often be self-indulgent with impunity; but with the poor it is otherwise. It would be impossible to devise a remedy more calculated to aggravate the pauperism which it is meant to cure than this doctrine of luxury and self-indulgence upon principle which is whispered by some of our modern economists to the conscience of the upper classes. Depend upon it, my friends, Dives did not wear his purple and fine linen, or partake of his sumptuous fare, in the interests of Lazarus, wisely understood; nor is it high time to transfer the sympathies with which eighteen centuries of Christendom have surrounded the beggar lying at the gate full of sores to the rich man who happily combines, according to this modern doctrine, "the maximum of a wise benevolence with the minimum of any form of regrettable asceticism."

If, then, you ask me, "How are we to deal with this great evil, pauperism, as a whole?" I cannot pretend to give an exhaustive answer; although I do not at all imply that an answer cannot be given. We will not here enter farther upon questions which, although of the highest importance, belong to a department of truth which is not strictly appropriate to the temples of Jesus Christ. How to heal this great social wound; how to reinstate in the honourable independence of labour the great class which has ceased to work, which has nothing, and which yet has

not ceased to live ;—this is a tremendous problem, upon which there is much, at any rate, to be said, and of which no man who has means and influence, and time at his command, can think too seriously. All that I ask now and here is, Can anything be done towards arresting the onward advance of this great consuming cancer, pauperism? Can we do anything towards at least tracing a sharp frontier between it and the masses of honest poverty which are constantly shading and sloughing off into its fatal embrace?

I believe we can ; and that such a work as that of the Ascot Hospital for Convalescents, which asks for your support, is calculated to assist us in doing this very materially.

Sermon preached at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, for the Convalescent Hospital at Ascot, 1870.

Personal Responsibility for the Gift of Revelation

“ And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath One that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

--ST. JOHN xii. 47, 48.

THE responsibility which is incurred by contact with truth is a subject which runs through the whole of Holy Scripture. Of some books of the Bible it forms the ground-thought, the leading idea. Thus the main object of the Book of Deuteronomy, which we are reading just now in the daily lessons, is to represent as vividly and as forcibly as might be to the mind of Israel that vast responsibility which devolved upon it as the peculiar and selected people, to whose custody God had committed the priceless treasure of the Sinaitic revelation. Thus the main practical object of the Epistle to the Hebrews is to remind a Christian Church which was tempted to lapse into Judaism of the moral impossibilities of renewing the once enlightened who had fallen away, of the danger of practically counting the blood of the covenant wherewith Christians are sanctified an unholy thing, and of thus doing despite to the Spirit of Grace, of the hope-

lessness of escape "if we neglect so great salvation." And man's responsibility for the receipt of truth is the burden directly or indirectly of most of our Lord's recorded teaching. It is a lesson conveyed by many of His parables, as by the Sower, the Talents, the Treasure hid in the Field, the wishes of the lost Dives on behalf of his five brethren. It is the burden of His denunciation of the Pharisees: they knew a higher truth than they acted upon. It is to guide Apostles in their ministry, bidding them shake off the dust from their feet against cities that will not receive them, warning them not to cast pearls before swine. It determines the woe pronounced against Capernaum, against Chorazin and Bethsaida; Tyre and Sidon, pagan as they were, would certainly have repented had they witnessed the works which were wrought in Galilee. It furnishes the motive pleaded by Jesus in the prayer which He uttered on behalf of all who took part in His death: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

That a revelation of truth hidden from our natural faculties has been given by God is the belief of Christendom. It is impossible to say that God could not give, or that man could not receive, such a revelation. That God would give it, is a presumption which naturally occurs to those who believe Him to be a Moral Being, and who have considered at all seriously the real wants of man. That He has given it is proved, partly by the varied correspondence of the Christian faith to the deepest wants of our nature, partly by such facts as miracles and

fulfilled prophecy, which are at once historically certain and strictly supernatural. And what this final revelation is, is no secret reserved for the privileged few ; its deepest verities are on the lips of every child who can say the Creed, or who can read the New Testament.

Now, any one who looks attentively at what is being said and done around us, will see that here in England the minds of men are disposed towards Revelation in three different ways. We leave out of account the multitudes of our great cities who have, alas ! no mental relations towards it, since they are practically heathen. But of those who are not ignorant that a revelation is asserted to have been entrusted to the Church of Christ, some are indifferent to the subject ; others are distinctly hostile to its claim to be a real revelation ; while others are, with whatever degree of sincerity, believers. All the various shades of human feeling which bear upon religion fall under one of these main divisions. All the remarks which we hear in conversation, all the disquisitions that we read in newspapers, and reviews, and folios, all the secret thoughts of men that circle in the busy hive of souls around us, are ultimately reducible to one of these three relations—indifference, hostility, acceptance or submission. Let us consider briefly what aspects of human responsibility are suggested by each variety.


We are confronted first of all by a great mass of indifference to religious truth. By indifference I do not mean all listlessness on the subject of religion. There is indifference and there is indifference ; there is the in-

difference of ignorance and the indifference of knowledge. Or rather the listlessness of ignorance ought not to be branded as properly indifference. When a man has never been brought into contact with truth, he has no relations towards it, and therefore not the specific relation of indifference. The callousness or contemptuousness which the heathen or the very ignorant may exhibit on spiritual subjects, is far less criminal than the indifference of Christendom, if indeed it be properly a crime at all ; for it has never had the advantages which are apparently required in order to produce genuine indifference. A thick tradition of darkness, the growth of generations of vice and error, has settled down upon the multitudes whose case I am considering ; nature and conscience have scarcely been permitted even for one moment to whisper their lessons and their protests ; the nascent aspirations of the soul have been appropriated to the worship of some odious fetish, or have been at once killed back to the ordinary level of a life of consistent animalism. Let us leave these and such as these in the hands of the All-Merciful, not without a prayer that His Name may be better known upon the earth, not without a pang of self-reproach at the little which we have done for that Name and for our fellow-creatures. Whatever be the seriousness and anxieties of their case, at least they have not enjoyed a position which has enabled them really to cultivate indifference to the beauty and to the claims of revealed truth.

Genuine indifference is like those creatures which are

only brought to light by the presence of a costly material which they foul and spoil. It requires a great opportunity, nothing less than a Divine Revelation. It is a famous specimen of the *corruptio optimi*. It corresponds in spiritual things to the darker enormities of advanced material civilizations; which could never have taken place, nay, could not have been devised, in primitive conditions of society. It is the growth of Christian climes, the hideous parasite which fastens itself upon generations which inherit the faith and love of the Christian centuries. It is found, in monstrous exuberance, among nations and in families which are eminently Christian. It must, forsooth, first stand in the very presence of Christ, that it may rise to the full proportions of its high-handed independence both of His Person and His Work. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin."

Indifference is sometimes deliberate, sometimes not. Thus there is the indifference of some public men and journalists, who consider religion an admirable supplement to the police, as being well calculated to reconcile the poor to their lot in life, and to furnish them with motives for sober living, but who would not think of wasting time upon the inquiry whether religion affects themselves. Another form of indifference is that which assumes in an off-hand style that no one of the positive religions of the world is even likely to be true. It therefore advises all men, Moslems, Pagans, or Christians, to follow the religions in which they have been born, not as



being true, but as being in their way, and containing perhaps a certain measure of relative as distinct from absolute truth. Then there is a very common form of indifference, which, admitting the Christian Revelation in general terms, professes to decide that while this or that doctrine is essential and fundamental, a third and fourth, resting upon precisely the same authority, is a matter of no consequence whatever. All of these kinds of indifference are in reality varieties of one great disease—a failure to see what is really due to the proved or even to the asserted presence and claims of a revelation from God.

Indifference to Revelation as a whole is too common to be treated as extraordinary. Yet in itself it is sufficiently surprising. Think what is man's position in this world. At best he has a few short years of life—three-score and ten. If man were here an eternally existent being; if he had perfect command of all the forces around him; if his gold or his chemistry could ensure for him a perpetual youth,—indifference to the revelation of a state of life beyond his sight would be less surprising. But, left to himself, man stands face to face with one great certainty, surrounded by uncertainties of the most anxious description. The one certainty is death: "It is appointed unto all men once to die." Face to face with death, man preserves his instinct, his sense of immortality; but to what will that immortality introduce him? Left to himself, man's future is darkness, a darkness which is only broken by the

lurid lights of his terrified imagination. This being the case, Revelation presents herself as unveiling the unknown future, in the name and with the authority of God. She proclaims that the Author of the universe has really broken His silence ; that His Mind is expressed in human words ; that it is possible to ascertain exactly the meaning of what He has said ; that beyond death there is the judgment, and heaven and hell ; and that on this side of death there is the conflict with sin, and the Cross of Christ, and the light and strength of the Spirit, and the resources of prayer, and the power of the Sacraments. Yet, in presence of this announcement, men are indifferent. They are passing through life ; they are passing from youth to manhood, and from manhood to old age ; they rise daily betimes in the morning, and they late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness ; they are intelligent, enterprising, industrious, and, as regards a vast variety of questions which are bounded by the horizon of time, they are thoughtful. Yet, standing face to face with the great proclamation of God's life and love which is made by Christendom, "they will not be learned nor understand, but walk on still in darkness." It is the mystery of a moral paralysis : "The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed ; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

How much of the thought, how much of the writing, how much of the conversation of our day, are but dis-

guised echoes of the perpetual colloquy between the claims of Revelation and the spirit of indifference ! Let us listen to the accents of that never-ceasing dialogue, with which all are more or less familiar, in which indifference, fatigued by the presence of an importunate visitor, endeavours to silence her by a feint of argument and remonstrance.

Revelation begins with God. "There is one Being," she says, "Who is unlike all else, Who is above all else, Who is the Author of their existence to all besides Himself ; Who upholds all around Him in the life which He has given them ; Who can neither be enriched nor impoverished ; Who is alone perfectly holy, adorable, blessed ; Who is eternal Self-existence, eternal Thought, eternal Love, Three yet One, the Almighty, All-wise, All-loving God." And indifference rejoins : "That is a large and intricate speculation ; the problems which it raises are very numerous ; they have no sufficiently practical interest for me."

Revelation continues : "This glorious Being is the tender and loving Father of men ; He has created mankind in a special sense for Himself. Man is so fashioned that he can only find the true rest and satisfaction of his being in God. This is the real secret of human destiny ; this is the true key to, and interpretation of, all human yearnings and aspirations. And this gracious God is within reach of His creatures : to know Him, to love Him, to commune with Him, is the highest, nay, it is the true privilege of intelligent life. And indifference languidly

observes : "That is a mystical view of existence ; it is rather overstrained ; it is fanciful : I do not care to engage in a tissue of reveries."

Revelation rejoins : " Unless man reaches this higher life, it were better not to have lived at all. Apart from union with the Blessed God, life is a hideous nightmare. And left to himself, man cannot reach that union. Man is fallen : he has been bruised and wounded ; he has lapsed into self-caused misery and ruin. Yet the eternal Love broods over the creature even in its degradation ; and the Divine and everlasting Son has laid aside His glory ; He has been born as an Infant ; He has died upon the Cross. His precious Blood still avails to wipe out all the foulest impurities ; his life-giving grace still has power to restore His servants to the image of the Holy One." And indifference mutters : " Is not that notion of the fall and of sin rather morbid ; and would not a more moderate view of human shortcomings be able to dispense with the offering of so costly an atonement ? "

Revelation continues : " At least, O man, thou must die ; and thou carriest within thyself the secret of thy immortality. Thou canst not kill out every hope, every fear within thee, that tells of a future to which I have the key. Thou canst not utterly give the lie to that implanted sense of right and wrong, which points to a law, to a lawgiver, and to a throne of judgment. At least consider the great Hereafter—that Hereafter which I proclaim to be necessarily one endless wail of agony or

one rapture of endless bliss." And indifference smiles its stupid or its cynical smile. "There would be something in your appeal," it says, "if you Christians were all agreed; but while you are engaged in an endless series of controversies among yourselves, sensible people may be content to keep their judgments in suspense, and to listen to your theories of the future without disquietude."

Such is indifference in the presence of Revelation. It would seem almost earnest as it brandishes its appeal to the divisions of Christendom, in the face of the Love of God, speaking to it in the Church and from the Bible. Yet it forgets that, however mournful and sinful these divisions are, they are as far as possible removed from justifying indifference. They are so many affirmations, however mistaken in their particular forms, of one supreme truth—the paramount importance of religion. However much Christians may differ among themselves, they are at least all agreed as to the preliminary fact that a Revelation from God does exist, and that to know as much about it as possible is a matter of vital necessity for man. In truth, the objections of indifference are not the language of men in earnest, but of men who are languidly fencing against the importunities of an unwelcome subject. They are like the pleas which almost benumbed travellers are said sometimes to have urged in favour of lying down in the snow to sleep and to die, when some friend has insisted upon the certain danger, and has entreated them at any cost to keep moving on. To

indifference, the constant proclamation by the Church of Christ of the good news revealed from heaven, is at best but as an antiquated poetry, or as "the sound of one that has a pleasant voice and can play well upon an instrument." Despite the rapid onward rush of time, despite the voices of love and warning and menace that sound around it, indifference sits in utter unconcern, as if balancing itself in sport over the brink of eternity, and wondering in a languid way what might possibly come of it, if perchance it should lose its footing.

Depend upon it, my brethren, if time, and money, and speech, and thought, and position, and influence, are things for which a moral being like man must give account, that account must be given more fully, more searchingly for contact with the gift of gifts—the revealed truth of God. Most of us, indeed, have been cradled in it, more or less nursed and fed by it, from our youth up. But even to have met truth on our path in life once, once only, is to have entered on a new set of moral circumstances. It is to have passed from the condition of Tyre and Sidon to the condition of Chorazin and Bethsaida. It is to have ceased to be in the sight of Eternal Justice what we were, and to have become something that we were not. To have met truth is to have met one who cannot henceforth desert us for ever, if she would, and who, if we suffer her not to aid and cheer us like the strong and tender friend that she is, will nevertheless not altogether leave us, even though she be driven for the present from our sight with quiet contempt

and scorn, or with open violence and outrage. It is to have met one towards whom we may, alas ! come to feel as towards a personal enemy, who dogs our steps through life, unveiling the well-known features at each crisis of difficulty and of sorrow, and who rises before us at the last with the stern visage and accents of an unwelcome phantom, to reproach us for not being what we might have been, to judge us for being what we are. For truth will set in judgment, not simply on the throne of the universe, but on a private tribunal erected by conscience in the sanctuary of each single soul. If Christ were not coming visibly to judge us from the clouds of heaven, conscience would invest His spoken word with a judicial power ; conscience would robe His message of loving-kindness and mercy in the habiliments of justice ; conscience would wring from her reluctant Judge the irreversible sentence, the sentence of the spoken word, upon those who have heard it, when the day of attention, and acceptance, and obedience has passed away.

Awake, then, thou that sleepest the sleep of indifference : arise ! Indifference is a levity against which the solemnities of life and death utter their perpetual protest. Thou must look Revelation in the face ; thou must give heed to a voice which speaks in the name of the Author of thy being ; thou canst not for ever ignore the one subject which should ever have the deepest interest for thinking men ; thou must in the name of reason and prudence, no less than in that of natural piety, banish


the spirit of indifference with a "Get thee behind me, Satan."

When a man ceases to be indifferent on the subject of Revelation, it is possible enough that he may become *hostile*. And in one sense hostility is better than indifference. It has more moral nerve ; it is, in its way, earnest ; and it thus promises better for the future. For it implies at least interest in, and attention directed towards, its object. It may be much more vexatious and bitter than indifference in its dealings with Christians, yet withal nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven. Saul of Tarsus, when breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, was already on the eve of his conversion.

And here let me at once say what is always unpopular, but is nevertheless true, that in a Christian country hostility to Revelation is more frequently than not of moral origin, albeit disguised in an intellectual dress. By this I do not mean that all who reject Christianity have committed enormous crimes, or that all who accept it are high-minded and pure. But if a man is living in one known sin, to which he clings, and which Christianity tells him will shut him out from God's presence hereafter, he has a powerful motive for wishing the Gospel to be untrue. The will has a subtle but strong purchase over the understanding in matters of belief : "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light," not because the light has less to be said for it than darkness, "but lest his deeds should

be reproved." Accordingly, as a matter of fact, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light;" again, I say, not because darkness is intellectually more respectable than light, but "because their deeds are evil." This does not merely apply to men who are in the habit of committing, and who love to commit, great offences which are condemned by the conventional standard of society. The principle is of much wider application; it applies to states of mind which we condone habitually in ourselves and others, and which, nevertheless, have a most powerful share in determining our attitude towards Revelation.

Consider, for instance, the general state of mind which is produced by affluent circumstances in the middle and upper classes of English society, at least during the early and middle years of life, while health is still unimpaired, and friends have not yet begun their long procession to the tomb. This state of mind is one of sincere satisfaction with this world just as it is; with its masses of poverty and suffering at the base of the social pyramid, and with a well-to-do class at the top, where life is curtained and pillowed in all the products of a high material civilization. This satisfaction is not thankfulness to God expressing itself in active forms of charity; it is the tranquil sense of material comfort which would on no account be disturbed, either by the thought of the present care of others, or by the prospect of its own future unsettlement and collapse.



Now, to such a state of mind the eternal future is not a welcome thought. Hell, of course, is out of the question; and, fresh from our drawing-rooms, and our theatres, and it may be our casinos, we read our Histories of Civilization, or our Histories of Rationalism in Europe, with sympathy and admiration, and pronounce hell a phantom which belongs to barbarous ages when men loved torture for its own sake, and were burnt for witchcraft. Even heaven is not so certainly welcome, since the ascertained accounts of heaven do not tally accurately with our conceptions of a really enjoyable, that is to say, a materialized existence. That repose in perpetual adoration of the Source of Light and Love seems tame and dull beside our round of excitements stimulated by and lavished upon created things; and in our secret hearts we prefer our present well-to-do life of comfort to the Paradise of the Bible. Thus wealth clogs all the finer spiritual sensibilities of the soul, and you see men, as the Psalmist says, whose hearts are "as fat as brawn," literally so cased and padded in the things of this life as to have lost altogether their sense of the supernatural. It was said by a great economist, Richard Cobden, of whom his countrymen, and all Christians, must ever speak with respect, whether or not they agree with his political opinions, "Sir, when I go to church there is one prayer which I say with my whole soul: 'In all time of our wealth, good Lord, deliver us!'" Ay! we have much reason to pray that prayer. "Deliver us from the quiet selfishness, deliver us from the grosser temptations; but

deliver us above all from the blinding, numbing, paralyzing power of easy circumstances, which make death and the great realities beyond it an unwelcome thought." If a man would deal fairly with revealed truth, he must at least enfranchise his will from slavery to the material. How solemnly does the voice of the great Apostle break in upon the tenor of our easy, comfortable existence!-- "This I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away."

A second mental habit which makes men hostile to Revelation is personal vanity. There is the vanity which refuses that original act of submission to God, without which faith cannot exist. And there is the commoner form of vanity, which turns Revelation into conversational capital. A man belongs, for instance, to a family in which the names of God and Christ have been honoured by the piety of generations, and are still honoured by his nearest relatives. How easy to make a reputation for independent thought! A few smart sayings about the Pentateuch gathered from the last sceptical writer, a few witticisms at the expense of the holy men who are held up to our reverence in the Bible, a few imposing, perhaps not very solid, generalizations about the laws by which religions are said to grow into shape

and to attain a world-wide authority—these constitute the stock-in-trade of the domestic Celsus or Porphyry of the nineteenth century. In the absence of any sufficient check, they go a great way to produce the impression which he desires to create—the impression that he is an independent thinker upon religious questions, and that his thought is upon the whole adverse to Revelation. It may be that when he begins to talk he does not exactly mean all that he says ; but he talks himself into unbelief by a process which, alas ! is only too easy. He is obliged to say strong things in order to create the desired impression about his independence, and in time he gets to believe the strong things which he says ; they are indented upon his mind by the mere force and vehemence of constant repetition. Thus his hostility to Revelation is, in truth, not of intellectual so much as of moral origin ; he has done truth an injustice, and he gets unconsciously to dislike what he has wronged. And his real fault has been a defective sense of responsibility. He has to feel that this talk on solemn subjects is a matter for which he will have to answer ; that he will have to answer for talking in such a sense at all, and especially for talking, as is most probably the case, on the strength of very imperfect information.

Then, again, there is sometimes the want of sufficient firmness and courage, especially in a place like this. Some men drift into a state of mind hostile too, or at any rate prejudiced against, religious truth, simply under the pressure of self-confident and brilliant declamation.

They hear first one doctrine argued down, as they think completely, and then another. They are, perhaps, victims of the fallacy of many questions. They are thus beaten back from point to point, and they lose their faith by a piecemeal process. And it is of course much easier, as Hooker long ago remarked, to attack truth than to defend truth. A few sharp and incisive epigrams, which make a lodgment for themselves in the memory, are easily uttered—epigrams against orthodoxy in general, epigrams against the power of the Sacraments, epigrams against the efficacy of prayer, epigrams against the work of the Holy Spirit and the atoning virtue of Christ's death, epigrams against the authority of Scripture, epigrams against the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, epigrams against the existence of God. Nothing is easier of production than sayings of this kind, and they leave a sting even when they do not represent an argument. And those who hear them are distinctly responsible for making head, if I may so speak, against a pressure which has no real right to influence conviction. It is especially important, in these days, that those who would assail our faith in detail, should be forced to say how much of positive truth they themselves admit as certain. If they admit nothing, they plainly are not in a position to enter upon the question at all. If they admit only a few elemental truths, they admit enough to enable you to put them on the defensive. For so strict and close is the interconnexion of truth with truth, that their scant admissions may easily furnish the premisses of the truths which their epigrams would condemn. And those who

can do so, in a firm yet humble spirit, are responsible for at least making good their position against these fugitive assailants.

If, then, a man is careful to endeavour by God's help to clear out of his way the moral difficulties which impede belief in our Lord and His Gospel, he will find that the purely intellectual ones are much more easily disposed of. Thus a perfectly humble man will be saved from making many mental mistakes. He will not think of assuming that there must be no difficulties in God's revelation of Himself to His creature ; that God, if He is seen at all by the soul, must be seen all round ; that there must be no clouds and darkness round about Him. He will not make his own thoughts about, and feelings towards, truth the measure of truth itself. He will remember that Revelation rests upon the authority of God, and is independent of the thoughts of men about it, even though it was at first given through human minds. He will feel in modern language that Revelation is objectively true, whether he realizes it subjectively or not.

One great cause of hostility to Revelation is that the mental temper of a large number of persons in our day is eminently and exclusively subjective. Each man makes his own thought the measure of all things. Each admits truth only so far as truth is in harmony with his personal idiosyncrasies. Truth is only to be true upon the condition that it is felt. Christ may be present in His Sacrament, if He is felt to be present ; not else. Scripture may be inspired, if you can feel the glow of its inspiration ;

not else. The Holy Spirit may sanctify, if you can measure and map out the exact track of His influence ; not else. Jesus Christ may be Divine, if, as you survey His human character, you can feel His Divine majesty ; not else. God may be what you desire Him to be ; He may be Benevolence without justice, Wisdom or Power without liberty of action, a Providence dealing with general laws, yet not a Providence taking count of each hair of the head and of each sparrow that falls to the ground. The subjective spirit, indeed, does not receive God as He has revealed Himself. It remodels Him ; it makes its own God. You only know what it means by God when you have examined the particular mind which names Him. The subjective temper accepts this attribute, and rejects that ; it admires this dispensation, and it is dissatisfied with that ; it can approve of one doctrine, but it takes exception against another. It is checked by no sense of impropriety or grotesqueness ; it is hampered by no suspicion that it is perpetually engaged in a work to which it is necessarily unequal. It is in truth dealing all along with its own human impressions, not with Divine realities ; and it talks, appropriately enough, not about religious *truth* but about religious *views*. It goes on its way, offering its kaleidoscope of ever-changing views as a substitute for that glorious creed which was once for all delivered to the saints ; and it ends—in another European country it may be said well-nigh to have ended—in that deep pit of materialism, where the belief in invisible truth is killed out altogether.

Now, this habit of mind must disappear when a man has realized the moral bearings of his own place in the universe. The faith is easy of acceptance when man believes that God is the centre of the intellectual universe, and that he himself is but an atom, moving in an infinitely distant orbit around the Sun Which lightens and attracts it. The faith is difficult when self is regarded in good faith as the sun and centre of all things, while God, or rather a nebulous view about God, along with views and theories many about things and persons divine and human, move around this central self. Such a habit of mind is not an intellectual curiosity so much as a moral fault : it disappears when the moral atmosphere has been purified by the quickened sense of responsibility. I do not say that no intellectual difficulties will remain when moral errors have been abandoned—far from it. Difficulties are only what we might expect in a religion which, like Christianity, mounts to the very throne of God, and embraces in its sacred writings the earliest annals of man, and penetrates into all the departments of human life and interest. But these difficulties, if not explained by patient study, will be reasonably set aside, when due weight is allowed to the immense presumptions in favour of a revelation, and to the actual evidence that one has been given. We *can* believe, if we are not predisposed morally against belief. This is one reason why faith is made so much of in the New Testament : it is a test of our moral fidelity to natural light. And for nothing are we more responsible than for the duty of preparing the

way of the Lord in the soul by making a clean sweep of all those dispositions which indispose us to receive Him.

The third relation in which men stand towards revealed truth, is that of acceptance and submission. Many of yourselves, my brethren, have by God's grace "embraced from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you." But does your responsibility end here—with the mere act of acceptance? Does it not rather assume proportions of the gravest and most momentous kind? Surely, unless the talent of truth may lie safely idle; surely, unless the warnings of revelation itself are to be a dead letter; it is certain that those who have it are responsible for at least three distinct forms of effort with regard to it.

(1) We are responsible, first of all, for *thinking* much about it.

It is not unnecessary to say this. Some Christians hold the faith in a very superficial way, with the very tips of their fingers—as if it were a matter of phrase and form rather than of spirit and life. They receive it indeed as a precious possession, and then they put it aside, very respectfully, high up on a shelf in their minds. Now and then they take it down, once a week, just to see that it is there; now and then some vagrant bandit, in the mere wantonness of destructive enterprise, tries to take it from them, and they defend it at least with obstinate courage. But they treat it rather as if it were a precious curiosity than as a loved and revered friend. And therefore when they talk about it, they use a few set phrases which they have

learned up, and beyond the precincts of which they do not venture. Of the truth which these phrases guard they have no real living hold : they do not see with their mental eye its strength or its beauty, or the interdependence of its several parts, the necessity of each portion to the whole, the vital force which runs through it and which carries with it the assurance of a final and world-wide victory. They are not in any sense at home with it ; and the consequence is, that when unbelievers or half-believers hear these Christians talk about religion, they get an impression that Christians do little else than manipulate a set of phrases which they do not understand, and that "orthodoxy" is a matter which belongs rather to propriety of expression than to energetic spiritual life.

One reason, brethren, is that we are not sufficiently alive to our responsibilities to truth. For instance, as a generation we are not earnest students of Scripture ; few of us have that keen interest in it which was universal in the ancient Church, when its several books could only be procured in manuscript and with some considerable difficulty. We have such abundant opportunities of studying it that we might almost seem to despise them ; just as those who live in Oxford often neglect to see chapels and libraries which strangers from the antipodes study with the keenest interest ; just as the wealthy will often profess themselves weary of the very sight of luxuries which are the envy of the poor. But when at the judgment-seat of Christ we stand face to face with the generations to whom a manuscript of Scripture was a

possession infinitely more precious than the masterpiece of a great painter would be to ourselves, and who felt that no amount of time and labour was misspent in the effort to understand it ; nay, when we stand face to face with the millions who in this country earn their daily bread by hard toil, and it may be sharp suffering, and to many of whom a few fragments of time devoted to the study of the words of Christ appear in the light of a rare and almost priceless luxury ;—how shall we answer for the use we have made of our vast and varied opportunities ? “The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day.” How truly, how severely, if so it be, that we have not even roused ourselves to ascertain its meaning !


Another reason of our superficial hold on truth is, that we Christians do not meditate. Many men only think of meditation as if it were a dreamy, listless process, unworthy of those who, as men and as Christians, have a serious work to do in life. But meditation is not Tityrus, lying at ease under the shade of a wide-spreading beech tree ; it is David, hunted for his life, yet deliberately pausing ever and anon to contemplate and to praise the Divine attributes of Justice and Mercy ; it is St. Paul, spending three years as a solitary recluse in the Arabian desert, that he may be nerved with a Divine strength for the conversion of the world and for his martyrdom ; it is St. John, an exile and a prisoner for the name and patience of Jesus, reading in the opened heavens the coming history of the Church.

Meditation is an intense act of the whole soul moving forth to welcome and to embrace truth ; it is intelligence, marking out the exact limits and range of truth ; it is affection, embracing truth for the sake of its fair and matchless beauty ; it is will, sternly resolving to express truth in act and life. Meditation, to be of real service, ought to be just as regular and systematic as prayer ; and when this is so, each of the great doctrines of the faith, each of the acts, and sayings, and sufferings of our blessed Lord, each of the means of grace, become to the soul familiar things, and not, most assuredly, despised or thought lightly of, because familiar. Ten minutes or a quarter of an hour of meditation each day is not much for a Christian to give to God ; but the man who gives even this, knows by experience at the end of a year that he has thus acquired quite a new grasp and sight of revealed truth. He sees how impossible it is to add to it, how yet more impossible to mutilate it. Between it and all other thought there is in his mind the sharpest line of demarcation. Scripture is no longer a dead letter to him, but a " living creature ; " he sees in Scripture, not a mere collection of documents relating to a distant time, to events and to states of mind which have passed away, but the perpetual Voice and Mind of One with Whom his soul holds constant communion, and in Whose light he traces with clear eye the certainty and the symmetry of the faith.

(2) We are responsible too for *propagating* the faith.

This duty is not a specialty of certain societies, or

of missionaries, or of clergymen. It belongs to Christians as Christians. If a Christian believes with the Apostles of Christ that there is "no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved," he cannot, as a humane as well as a sincere man, refrain from making efforts to spread that Name among his fellow-creatures. He will not be daunted either by vulgar denunciations against proselytism, or by the sneers which are so often levelled against the efforts of our missionary societies. Their efforts may be in many ways feeble and unsatisfactory; but the cause which they represent is one as to which no Christian can dare to be indifferent. If his faith be not self-communicative, it is already paralyzed, dying, or dead. How indeed could it be otherwise than self-communicative? How can a man seriously believe that he has been bought from sin and death by the priceless blood of the Eternal Son, that he is sanctified and quickened by His Spirit and His Sacraments, that he has access to the Father through a union with the Son, affected by the Spirit,—how can he look forward with tranquil thankfulness to death, and with a good hope, if not without awe; to judgment, and yet not desire to communicate these blessings to his fellow-creatures? An absence of interest in the spiritual state of those around us, or of the heathen, is a certain proof that we ourselves have no vital hold upon the great truths of Redemption. Holding those truths, we owe the communication of them, as opportunity may arise, to others—to servants, to friends, to



relations, to the poor, to the heathen, to all who know them not, yet who like ourselves have to encounter life and death. Thus we too are "debtors both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the philosophers and to the unwise." We are not, indeed, to throw Divine pearls before human swine; but the fear of doing this may be reasonably and rightly entertained, while yet it leaves us more opportunities than we can use for making God's way "known upon the earth, and His saving health among all nations." Ah! "we believe the faith," it has been said, "when we are willing to die for it." If Christ our Lord, compassionating our weakness, does not ask our blood, at least He has a right to our time, to our money, to our efforts, to our interest, to our prayers.

(3) Above all, if I may so speak, we are responsible for *living* the faith.

Who of us that knows himself truly, or that knows even some measure of truth about himself, must not feel keen pain and shame when he reflects on this department of his Christian responsibility? Who of us must not feel that there is some justice (at least *some*) in the vaunts of the opponents of Christ, that while Christians make profession of a high and unearthly creed, they live very much like everybody else,—self-seeking or aimless lives with no mark of the Cross, no Print of the Nails visible upon them? Nay, more; is it so, that while Christ's Name is on our lips our hearts are given to that which He has for ever condemned, and, which He has told us, must shut

men out from His presence for ever? Are we “conformed to this world,” or have we been “transformed by the renewing of our minds”? Do we live “after the flesh,” or do we “by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body”? Is our life that of men who have “put off the old man with his deeds, and who have put on the new man, who after God is created in righteousness and true holiness”? Do we “crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts”? Is this systematic crucifixion of our evil inclinations at least as real a business with us as keeping our accounts and making our way in life? Is prayer, and all that bear on it, a matter of interest as keen and enduring as the course of public events, or daily occupations and amusements? Do we consider what it is to live in a lost world as the family and representatives of our crucified Lord? In short, do we in any sense “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called”? Are we “doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving our own selves”?

Brethren, if it is worth our while to be Christians at all, it is worth our while to be Christians in downright earnest. Nothing is gained either in this world or in the next by being a half-Christian, who believes in those fragments of the creed which are not rejected by the irreligious opinions of the day, and who selects for practice certain duties and precepts which do not inconvenience him. In this supreme concern, as in all lesser concerns, it is simple prudence to be thoroughgoing,—“to bring every thought into the obedience of Christ,”—to “present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,

which is our reasonable service." It has been said that if Christians led Christian lives the world would be converted in spite of itself in the course of a few years. And certainly the most formidable opponents of Christ our Lord are not the arguments and sneers of His intellectual adversaries, nor yet the gigantic sins of those who own no allegiance to Him. His worst foes are they of His own household, who by their sins and inconsistencies "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame."

"The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day." It will judge our indifference; it will judge our prejudices and our rejection of light; it will judge our inconsistencies. If we have never been real students of Holy Scripture—if we have never meditated before—let us begin this Lent. Let us set apart a fixed period of time daily for the study of the Mind of God in Holy Scripture. If we have never done anything to spread Christ's Name among our fellow-creatures, let us begin this Lent. If we have never brought our lives into something like harmony with the law and spirit of Jesus Christ, let us begin this Lent. If we have never repented of soul-destroying sins, let us repent this Lent. Let us begin, while yet we may, while the word of Christ, speaking in the Gospel, speaking in the Church, is still our friend and guide. One day that word will judge us: it judges us already even now. Let us think, if not of this present judgment, at least of that last award, and take our parts. Let us think of it as the goal to which

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hour by hour we are moving onwards, face to face with an ever-accumulating weight of responsibility for known truth ; let us think of it as that which may be to us, through our Saviour's mercy, if we will, not the dreaded knell of doom, but the first tidings of the dawn of the eternal morning.

Sermon preached in the Oxford Lenten Series, 1868.

Short Passages

I.

THE senses cannot test the reality of anything which lies properly beyond their ken, and in view of which "we walk by faith and not by sight." They have to do with matter : they cannot touch spirit ; and if any inference is drawn from their very limited capacity as against the reality of that vast world of spiritual existences which is confessedly out of their reach, it is, beyond all question, a worthless inference. Here is the great mistake of Materialism. Materialism is on strong ground, from which it cannot be dislodged, so long as it insists that the senses, so far as they reach, are trustworthy reporters of truth. Its mistake lies in saying that they are the only reporters of truth, and that nothing is to be held for truth which they cannot verify ; that the whole world of mental and spiritual facts, with which the senses have no relation whatever, is therefore an imaginary and non-existent world ; that, in short, matter, in whatever shape, is alone real.

2.

"GOD commendeth His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "If God so loved

us, we ought also to love one another." The unmerciful servant had arguments at his command, no doubt, for exacting his dues ; but there was a higher principle to which he himself owed much, and which ought to have silenced them. Even where compassion cannot be indulged without injury to society, without a wrong to justice, it still must remain, as if in a state of partly suspended animation—like that Divine Compassion which saw in all its necessity and all its justice the coming ruin of Jerusalem, yet wept over Jerusalem nevertheless.

3.

EACH of us has some intended niche to occupy—some one particular work to do, just as surely as it was the work of our Divine Redeemer, and of Him alone, to achieve the salvation of the world.

It may be a task of many years. It may be a single action, a single witness to truth, a single act of duty, done on one particular day, at one hour,—nay, in the compass of a few minutes, yet carrying in it all the moral power of a lifetime—and exhausting, by being done, the reasons for which, in the Eternal Mind, life was given to the agent. A Martyr may compress into a few minutes of agony all the moral and spiritual work on which a philanthropist expends his time during his fourscore years : a mother may, by bringing up a child in the fear of God, do as much in the eyes of our common Master as a great teacher or statesman. The question is, What


are we each of us *meant* to do? and this question can only be answered by a survey of our capacities and our circumstances, which do practically interpret the Will of God to each of us.

4.

It is indeed pre-eminently true of the ministry of our Lord, that while His Human Ear was ever wakened to hear as the learned, His instructions were generally directed, not to stimulate the intellect, but to solace the woes of man. His teaching, indeed, contained within its compass the final and authoritative solution of the chief problems that can engage and embarrass human thought. But the form of His Teaching was popular as distinct from scientific, concrete rather than abstract, religious and not philosophical. It was addressed to the wounded heart rather than to the anxious intelligence of man. Sin, actual and inherited, had made man weary of a burden which he could not bear, and in view of which life and death were alike unwelcome. And Christ, our Lord, throughout His ministerial Life, was the speaker of a word in season, whereby He not only gave light to them that sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, but actually guided the feet of humanity into the true way of peace.

5.


FOR, indeed, no truth is more clearly revealed to us than this, that Spiritual Life, whether given us at our first



New Birth into Christ, or renewed, after penitence, in later years, is the free, fresh gift of the Father of Spirits, uniting us by His Spirit to His Blessed Son. Nature can no more give us newness of life, than a corpse can rise from the dead by its unassisted powers. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." A sense of prudence, advancing years, the tone of society around us, family influences, may remodel the surface form of our daily habits. But Divine grace alone can turn the inmost being to God ; can "raise it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness ;" can "clothe it in that new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

6.

As to the whole Catholic Church of Christ, it was already plainly built upon Jesus Christ as its historical foundation. It grew out of the fact of His appearance in the world and ascent to heaven ; He was the reason and account of its existence ; so that if He had not lived and died, its existence as St. Paul found it, when he entered it at his conversion, would have been inexplicable. In this sense, no man could lay a foundation other than that which was already laid, which was Jesus Christ. It was impossible to undo history ; and history was there to say that the Apostolical Church was built on Jesus Christ and on no one else. To insist upon this is not altogether superfluous. A paradox which found favour with some of the earlier moods of German Rationalism went to the



effect that St. Paul and not Jesus Christ was the real founder of Christendom. How the writer of the indignant appeal, "Was Paul crucified for you Corinthians, or were ye baptized in the Name of Paul?" could ever have been seated, by the convictions of any intelligent readers of his Epistles, in his Master's place, might well raise our wonder; if only experience did not prove that of all credulity the easiest is that which is enjoined by unbelief, and of all theories, the wildest those which are put forward in order to discredit the creed of Christendom. If the Church is built upon the labour of apostles, as her foundations, the apostles themselves rested on the Chief Corner-stone.

7.

It has been finely said, that among the students of nature irreverence is possible only to the superficial. You are too conscious of the great powers in whose presence you move and work, of the mysteries above, around, within you, of the magnificent and exhaustless subject, whose fringes you seem only to have touched when you know most about it, to escape from the awe, which all true knowledge, with its ever-present consciousness of a larger ignorance, must always inspire. In this matter science, whatever be her immediate interest, is ever the same. You can understand Newton comparing his finest achievements to the child playing with the waves as they break upon the sand; and as you move

along the awful frontier where the world of matter shades off into the world of spirit, not the least service that you can do to the men of this generation is by teaching them the mysteriousness of what they see and are, to prepare them to do justice to what Revelation has to say about what they do not see, and what they will be.

8.

To make Christ the foundation of the soul's life, would be to interpose a creature between its deepest sanctities and its Maker, unless Christ Himself was God. A purely human Christ might conceivably be the architect, or even the scaffolding of the Spiritual Temple; he could not be its One Foundation. It is the Divine Christ of St. Paul Who is that One Foundation: Whose words have absolute authority; Whose example carries resistless weight; Whose redemptive work saves us, if we will, to the uttermost, from our strongest enemies, from sin and death; Whose grace and power are not matters of antiquarian interest, but living and perpetual facts in the Sacraments of His Church;—Who is the solid foundation of our Life and Hope. It is His living Person wherein Christians are rooted, and upon which they are built up; certain that from Him they can draw all needful nourishment, and that upon Him they can rest with unwavering trust.

9.


HUMAN character in its broad, common features, and in its individual peculiarities, is well worth the closest, the severest observation ; and to stimulate this observation, to train the eye in taking note of all that reveals the soul within, is an indispensable part of an adequate clerical training. Much, doubtless, can only be learnt by actual intercourse with other men. Much, too, may certainly be learnt from books and from the experience of those who have lived longer than we, and who hand on to us something of the accumulated wisdom of the centuries behind them. But however we may study him, man, on his ethical as well as on his mental side ; man, in his strength as well as in his weakness ; man, in his phases of bitterest hostility to God, as well as in his saintliest moods of conformity to God's word and will ; man, at the dull, stupid level of his average action, as well as in his most exceptional and heroic efforts, is a study only less important for our purpose than is God Himself. For it is when human nature is seen in its many-sidedness, in its greatness, in its littleness, that the word in season, God's Revelation of Himself in the Life and Death of His Blessed Son, can be spoken to some serious purpose. Our ministry is not the random proclamation of a scientific discovery, involving nothing but an intellectual interest ; but the careful adaptation of a Divine Remedy to the wants of a patient, whose case and symptoms we have accurately considered.

10.

WHEN we affirm that there is salvation in none other than Jesus, we do not deny that other religions, besides Christianity, contain certain elements of truth. Of course they do. They would not last as they last if they did not. It is the element of truth in false religions which enables them to resist dissolution, and they possess this amount of invigorating truth in different degrees. But then, error enters into their composition much more largely than truth does; and so, though such religions may within limits do a certain amount of good to their votaries in virtue of the truth which they hold, as it were, in solution, they cannot possibly save. No religion but that of Christ Jesus, God and Man, bridges over the chasm which yawns between earth and heaven; no other religion touches the human heart in all the depths of its corruption, or touches the Heart of God in all the Boundlessness of His Charity. And therefore, "neither is there salvation in any other."

11.


REFLECT, brethren, on the reality of spiritual death, linked as it often is in one and the same man, as if by a ghastly ligament, to the highest animal and mental life. The body is in the full flush of its powers; the mind day by day plays lightly over the surface, or grapples earnestly with the substance, of a thousand



topics. But the spiritual self is, to all intents and purposes, dead; and neither boisterous animal spirits nor intellectual fire can galvanize it into life. The spiritual senses do not act: the spiritual world is as if it did not exist. The eye of that soul is closed; it sees in spiritual truth only diseased imaginations or needless scruples. Its ears are closed: Christ and His apostles are to it only like any other talkers in the Babel of human tongues. Its mouth is closed: it never speaks to God in prayer, or to man in faith and love. Its hands and feet are tightly bandaged in the grave-clothes of selfish habit; it cannot rise; it cannot engage in works of benevolence and mercy for the love of God; it must lie on, in the darkness and putrefaction of its spiritual tomb; while death, as the Psalmist says, gnaweth upon it.


12.

IF any one thing is certain about Christianity, it is that Christianity is an appeal from the visible to the Invisible. Christianity is a constant appeal from the importunity of sense to the presence and action of the Eternal Spirit. Nay, it is more; for it presupposes a spiritual world of which nature and the better philosophy is cognizant; and then it proclaims the introduction within this world of a higher power and principle, which raises it above its original level, and thus constitutes the supernatural.



13.

IF we pass to the bearings of the apostle's doctrine upon efforts at human improvement around us, it is obvious to remark that to nothing can it apply with more urgency and directness than to the sacred work of Education. Education is the most important department of the self-maintaining activity of the Church of Christ. By Education the Church takes possession of her place and share in the coming age; by it she hands on to the minds and hearts and hands of another generation the treasure of faith, and love, and duty which came to her nineteen centuries ago, and of which she is the trustee in the interests of humanity. If she had nothing better in her keeping than a human speculation about God, there would be a certain degree of immodesty and violence in this uninterrupted effort to cramp and mould the otherwise free thoughts and aspirations of a future time within the narrow formulæ of the past. But to possess a revelation from heaven is to be already in advance of the highest efforts of human religious genius; and to communicate it is the first duty which its guardians owe to human ignorance and to human suffering. "He made a covenant with Jacob, and gave Israel a law which He commanded our forefathers to teach their children; that their posterity might know it, and the children which were yet unborn; to the intent that when they came up they might show




their children the same ; that they might put their trust in God ; and not to forget the works of God, but to keep His commandments.”

14.

THE very phrase, “useful” knowledge, begs at the outset an enormous question, as to what knowledge *is* really useful, or most useful to man ;—a question which can only be answered when it is decided whether man does or does not exist in an eternity where his happiness depends upon his conduct in time. Thus even its intellectual aim is a very narrow and poor one. It keeps the pupil’s eyes off all the great horizons of human thought and interest, because in resting on them it would be obliged, either definitely to accept, or explicitly to reject, the Christian creed. It merely supplies matter for conjecture on the subjects of deepest concern to a human being ; it offers nothing in the way of guidance or satisfaction ; and as to morals, if it is consistent, it abstains from all interference, except so far as the law of the land, or the lowest of conventional standards, may oblige ; it allows a boy to “take care of himself.”

15.


WHEN St. Peter says that we are to “honour all men,” he means, no doubt, that if opportunity arises we are to give practical expression to the disposition to



honour them. But he means, first of all, that this disposition should itself exist. And it is here that we reach the point at which the need is felt of basing the precept upon a conviction. Why should we thus be disposed to "honour all men"? That question must be answered, if at all satisfactorily, by the doctrines of the Church of Christ. For it is obvious, my brethren, that this disposition to yield honour to the whole company of our fellow-creatures, is not natural to man, being such as he is. Our first instinct is not to honour, but to depreciate our brother-men. This tendency is part of that self-assertion which, in sinners, is a leading result of the fall, and which is impatient of rivalry, even where there is no reason to fear opposition. The gentle depreciation of others is a more welcome form of self-assertion to a refined society than is the boisterous and coarse glorification of self.

16.

DOUBT, it is said, is the parent of inquiry; it is the foe of mental stagnation; it explodes superstitions; it means movement, energy, progress. This may be true as regards many subjects of human interest, our information respecting which involves a mixture of truth and error; in these doubt has its province and function; it is a stimulating, purifying, corrective influence. But every sensible man would agree that to doubt necessary truth, such as the axioms of mathematics, could lead to




no mental advantage whatever ; and for Christians who believe that God has spoken, the Christian Revelation is necessary truth. No man who holds this Revelation to be true can regard doubt about it as other than one of the greatest of possible misfortunes ; to take any other view of such doubt is to be already committed to its principle.

17.

Now it is a matter of common sense, that doubt cannot thus utterly destroy the value of the Gospels, of prayer, of Holy Communion, without moral loss. Aye, it shatters the very springs of moral effort ; it makes barren and unfruitful those rare moments of life in which moral energy should find its refreshment and recover its force. Why need I insist on a truism which will find an echo in too many a weary heart ? To talk of doubt as an advantage is the language either of ignorance or of insincerity : doubt is above all things, in a majority of cases, moral paralysis : it is the loss of the motives which makes life happy by making it useful.

18.

THERE are apparently three important gaps in the evolutionary sequence, which it is well to bear in mind. There is the great gap between the highest animal instinct, and the reflective, self-measuring, self-analyzing mind of man. There is the greatest gap between life,




and the most highly organized matter. There is the greatest gap of all between matter and nothing. At these three points, so far as we can see, the Creative Will must have intervened otherwise than by way of evolution out of existing material,—to create mind,—to create life,—to create matter.

19.

MAN'S true dignity depends not upon the history of his physical frame, but upon the nature of the immaterial principle within him, and above all upon the unspeakable honour conferred upon both parts of his being when they were united to the Eternal Person of God the Son, in the Divine Incarnation.

20.

ALL men know that they will die ; yet how few seriously prepare for death ! All serious Christians believe in the Day of Judgment ; yet who among ourselves looks forward to it, in the same practical spirit with which we prepare for the next examination in the schools ? The truth is, that the moral importunity of the future is arrested by the imagination, which suggests a variety of intervening contingencies, not contradicting the ultimate result, but modifying the pressure which it ought to exert upon the will, very considerably.



21.

WE are justified, not by our rejection of error, but by our acceptance of truth. To accept truth, it may be necessary enough to reject error ; but it is truth, positive truth, which illuminates and invigorates the soul of man. To recognize the non-existence of what is not, cannot do more than clear away obstructions to our real improvement : we are only made better and stronger by what is. St. Paul does not say, Know ye not the moral indefensibility of party spirit, or the religious indefensibility of the popular paganism? He does say, " Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ? "

22.

IT is, indeed, a part of the inalienable dignity of the human soul that some influence, whether for good or evil, is inevitably exercised by each one of us—by the youngest, the weakest, the most illiterate. Often, indeed, this influence is so feeble or so subtle as to escape analysis, or even to escape observation ; but it is there, whether we can detect and take it to pieces or not ; and He to Whose eye the secrets of the moral world are open, and Who can take the full measure of its mysteries, has already, in His Wisdom and His Love, weighed and judged it.

23.

ST. PAUL'S contrast between the flesh and the spirit, in the Epistle to the Galatians and elsewhere, shows that he usually associated the animal life or *ψυχή* with the animated body ; and that he contrasted this merely animal vitality with the living spirit, which is above and distinct from it. A life according to the flesh is a life in which animal vitality and instincts control thought and action ; a life according to the spirit is a life ruled by the immortal principle within man, itself renewed and reinforced by the Eternal Spirit of God. In like manner, the spiritual man (*πνευματικός*) is contrasted both with the man of animal life, and with the man of the flesh (*ψυχικός* or *σαρκικός*), as being two aspects of the same thing ; and St. Paul does not really present us with an analysis of the constitutive parts of human nature, differing from that of his Divine Master.

24.

THE Divine Image, expressed in man's intelligence and freedom ; the Atoning Blood, giving the measure of man's preciousness in the eyes of God ; the glorified Manhood of Jesus, revealing to man his capacity for glory ;—these are the privileges of no class or station ; they are the right and the possession of humanity.

25.


MERE human sympathy, however strong, wears itself out; it is at least half physical in its nature, and its energy shares the vicissitudes and decay of our bodily frame. One motive only—the love of God—really lasts; and of the love of God, the love of man, whom God has loved so well as to create and to redeem him, is in reality the consequence and the attestation.

26.

RELIGION, whether it be the vital principle of an institution or of a single soul, cannot afford to lend an ear to criticisms, which, after all, left to themselves, are mutually self-destructive. If wisdom is justified of her children, it is all that can fairly be expected. A single eye to God's glory and to the claims of truth will indeed, in its majestic strength, act and speak with consideration for the prejudices and weaknesses around it; and it may be trusted to discern, with a tolerably unerring instinct, the point at which charity shades off into disloyalty to that which cannot be surrendered.

27.

CERTAINLY, belief in the existence of spirit at all carries with it as great a weight of mystery, carries us as completely beyond the precincts of sense, and right into the heart of the world invisible, as does any portion of



revealed truth. What in Himself the Eternal Spirit is, who shall say? We can, perhaps, arrive at no nearer conception of a spiritual substance at all, than is furnished by the crude and negative idea of highly attenuated matter. And how spirit acts on spirit; how the Divine and Infinite Spirit acts on our human spirit; how He penetrates it, lightens it, warms it, strengthens it: this is and must for ever remain, here below, within the province of high and unsolved mystery.

28.

THE day of Pentecost was not to be deemed a day apart; it was merely the first day of the Christian centuries. The tongues of fire might no longer be visible; but the gift which they symbolized would remain. The Spirit, being the Spirit of Christ, had made the Life of Christ to be for ever in Christendom, nothing less than a reality of the present. Whatever the past might have been, whatever the future might yet be, one present fact was certain: the Christian knows himself to be a temple of the indwelling Presence. From the moral pressure of this conviction, enforcing activity in good, and resistance to evil, and the constant homage of an inward worship, there is no escape except by a point-blank denial of it.

29.

How many men of the present day conceive of Jesus Christ only as of a Teacher of commanding influence,

Who lived in this world eighteen centuries ago, and whose life has left an impression not merely indelible, but even yet, in some ways, deepening! Recognizing this, they gather up all that can illustrate His appearance among men. The idioms of Eastern speech, the scenery of the lakes and hills of Palestine, the flora, the climate, the customs of the unchanging East, all are summoned by the highest literary skill, that they may place vividly before us the exact circumstances which surrounded the life of Christ. But here too often the appreciation of that life really ends. Men learn habitually to think of Christ as of one who belongs only to human history. They think of Him as of one who lived on the earth eighteen centuries ago, and has passed away. Where He is now, what He is, whether He can be approached by us, whether He can act upon us, are points from which they either turn away their thoughts, or which perhaps they contemptuously dismiss as belonging to the category of theological abstractions. And if St. Paul were here, whatever else he might say about such students, would he not certainly say this, that they know Christ only after the flesh?

30.

GRACE is the actual communication of Christ's quickening Manhood—the recreative principle of the New Covenant—by the agency of the Spirit, chiefly through the medium of the Sacraments, to the souls and bodies of His members. It is this stupendous gift which at once

discovers and stimulates man's capacity for an existence in which humanity will be really what, apart from Christ, it is only in idea. The glory, the sinlessness, the ineffable Majesty of the Ascended Christ, is therefore the measure of the hopes of man. Throned above the highest intelligences of heaven, adored by all that is purest and strongest and wisest in the Universe of God, the Sacred Manhood of the Lord Jesus gives a point to our enthusiasm on behalf of our race. We Christians accept the taunt of an ancient heresy ; we are *ἀνθρωπολάτραι*. We can worship Humanity without violating our moral sense, without feeling that we are wronging God, or worshipping a dead abstraction ; we adore man's nature in Jesus, the Holy, Harmless, Undeiled One, who is Most High in the glory of God the Father. And from that Throne of His in the highest heavens there descends upon the race which He has ennobled, and which He yearns to glorify and to save, an interest, a radiance in Christian eyes, an inheritance of, a title to honour, which has made the precept of the apostle one of the main factors of the moral life of Christendom.

31.

FOR what is it that Christianity has done for mankind, in respect of the most awful moment of our common destiny? It has done this :—it has given us a broader and more distant horizon ; death is merely a halting-place in the journey of existence, and Christ has bidden us

look beyond it. Beyond those dark caverns, beyond those frowning heights in the immediate foreground of our view, we can catch the summits of a distant range upon which the sunshine rests unceasingly, and which we may, if we will, reach at last. For Christians, indeed, death is not without its awe, not most assuredly without a sorrow, which Christ Himself has shared and blessed ; but it has had the sting of despair taken altogether out of it ; the Christian dead are yet, in the truest and most absolute sense, among the living ; and there is a life of glory and honour in reserve even for the poor body which, for a while, and so entirely, death has humbled beneath his sway. “ And I look for the Resurrection of the dead,”—that is the Faith of the whole Church of Jesus Christ. It is one department of her trust in the love of a Divine Saviour, “ Who shall change our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious Body, according to the mighty working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.”

32.

THIS sanctification of man's whole being radiates from the sanctification of his inmost self-consciousness, involving the self-dedication to God of that imperishable centre of life, of that “ I,” which is at the root of all feeling and all thought, which is each man's true, indivisible, inmost self.

33.

It may, then, seem a poor and trite thing to say, but real belief in the Holy Ghost implies an habitual sense of the reality of a spiritual and supersensuous world. There is in fallen human nature a constant and profound tendency to sink under the dominion of materialistic habits of thought, that is to say, to surrender ourselves to the fascination and empire of the bodily senses.

34.

MAN as man is intelligent and free. He is not merely an animal organism endowed with life; he is a spirit capable of comprehending the significance of its own existence, capable of knowing the Author of its being, capable of freely deciding to obey or to defy Him.

This is the first great reason for honouring all men. All men are endued with an immortal, conscious, self-determining principle of life. Or rather that principle is each man's true self, around which all else that belongs to him is clustered, and to which it stands in the relation of a property or it may be of an accident.

35.

EVERY Christian who believes in the essential harmony of all truth must be anxious to reconcile the statements of men of science with the truths of Divine Revelation, so

far as our present knowledge enables us to do so. But God's word in Revelation will never pass away ; while theories respecting God's working in nature are, as we know, changing almost from year to year.

36.

THAT awful and blessed gift of life ;—we only take its measure in the presence of death ; then only do we perceive that, whatever may be its length, it is but the moment upon which there hangs an eternity. What we are outwardly in this world, what men think or say of us, of our titles, of our incomes, or of the absence of them ;—all this matters but little ; all these are levelled by death. But what we are in ourselves, in our consciences, our hopes, our affections, and wills, before God our Father in heaven, and His blessed Son our Divine Redeemer ;—this is a matter of an importance that is simply unspeakable, fraught to each one of us with consequences more lasting and momentous than the mind of man can conceive.

37.

IT is a false spiritualism which would cast discredit on the senses, acting within their own province ; it is false to the constitution of nature, and to the interests of truth. For if the bodily senses are untrustworthy, how can we assume the trustworthiness of the spiritual senses ? if

hearing and eyesight and smell and taste and touch make no true reports of external objects, how shall we be certain that the moral perceptions do not report a series of sublime illusions? To cast doubt upon the trustworthiness of a bodily sense, is at first sight to enhance the preciousness of the supersensuous and of our methods of reaching it. But it is this, only at first sight. Religion does touch the material world at certain points, and the reality of its contact is to be decided, like other material facts, by the experiment of sense. Whether our Lord really rose with His wounded Body from the grave, or not, was a question to be settled by the bodily senses; and our Lord therefore submitted Himself to the exacting terms which St. Thomas laid down as conditions of faith.

38.

THE universe is the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in it. This is the most direct lesson of Psalm civ. God is as truly present with the lowest as with the highest forms of life: He is as present with the lowest, and wildest, and fiercest animals, with every variety of tree and plant, with primary rocks, and with slow processes of mineral transformations proceeding through unmeasured ages deep beneath the earth's crust, with heavenly bodies, moving, in their undeviating obedience to law, through trackless space—as with glorified men, as with archangels. He cannot but be thus everywhere present; He cannot contract His illimitable Being, and


make corners in His universe where He is not. And there are not, properly speaking, degrees of His presence, although there are various modes of its manifestation. He is everywhere in all the proper intensity and force of His Being, simply because He is God.

39.

THE absence of intelligence is often held to constitute a barrier against this honour of man as man. Many who are indifferent to wealth and station cannot bring themselves to respect the unintellectual. They will not honour anything human that cannot take its place at the marriage-feast of intellect. Dulness is the one heresy which merits excommunication: brilliancy, even the most superficial, is like the charity of the New Testament; it avails to cover a multitude of sins.

40.

“I MUST work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” And yet, although our Lord’s work, in its higher and characteristic aspects, as well as His comprehension of it and purchase over it, was unshared by any other, His words do nevertheless express a conviction and a law which should govern every one of our lives, which do govern every consecrated life. I mean a conviction of the shortness of the day of work; and a deep sense of




the duty of making the most of it. "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

41.

EASTER Day is like the wedding-day of an intimate friend: our impulse as Christians is to forget ourselves, and to think only of the great Object of our sympathies. On Good Friday we were full of ourselves,—full of our sins, of our sorrows, of our resolutions. If we entered into the spirit of that day at all, we spread them out, as well as we could, before the dying eyes of the Redeemer of the world; we asked Him, of His boundless pity, to pardon and to bless us. To-day is His day, as it seems, not ours. It is His day of triumph; His day of re-asserted rights and recovered glory; and our business is simply to forget ourselves; to intrude with nothing of our own upon hours which are of right consecrated to Him; to think of Him alone; to enter with simple, hearty, disinterested joy upon the duties of congratulation and worship which befit the yearly anniversary of His great victory. "This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Such are the first thoughts of loyal and loving Christians: but they are not altogether encouraged by the apostles of Christ. Our Lord does not really end His work for us on Calvary; He does not suffer for us, and



triumph only for Himself. We have a share in His triumph not less truly than in His sufferings :—

“ Thou knowest He died not for Himself, nor for Himself arose,
Millions of souls were in His heart, and thee for one He chose :
Upon the palms of His pierced hands engraven was thy name,
He for thy cleansing had prepared His water and His flame.
Sure thou with Him art risen ; and now with Him thou must go
forth,
And He will lend thy sick soul health, thy strivings might and
worth.
Early with Him thou forth must fare, and ready make the way
For the descending Paraclete, the third hour of the day.”¹

¹ “*Lyra Innocentium.*”



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